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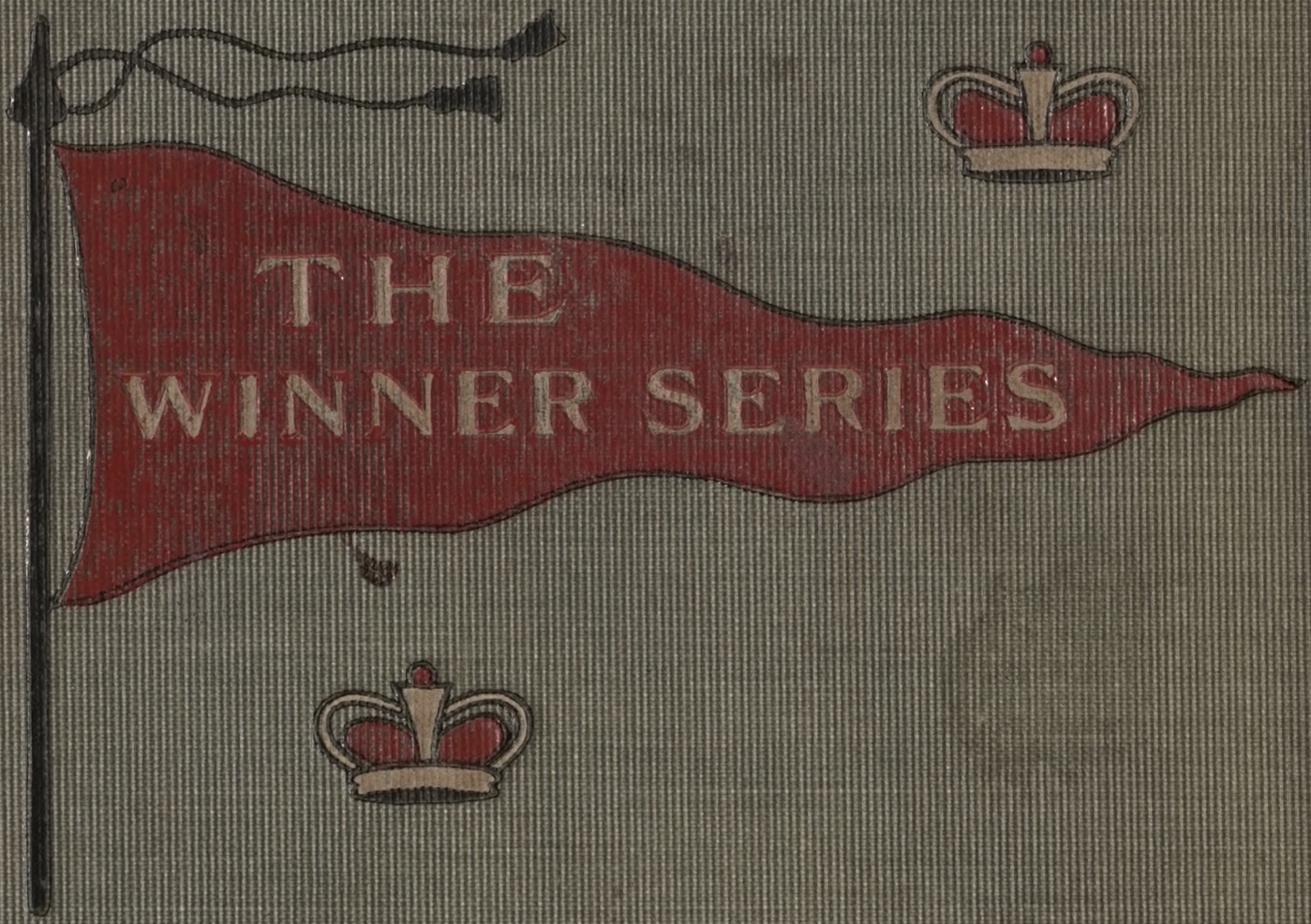

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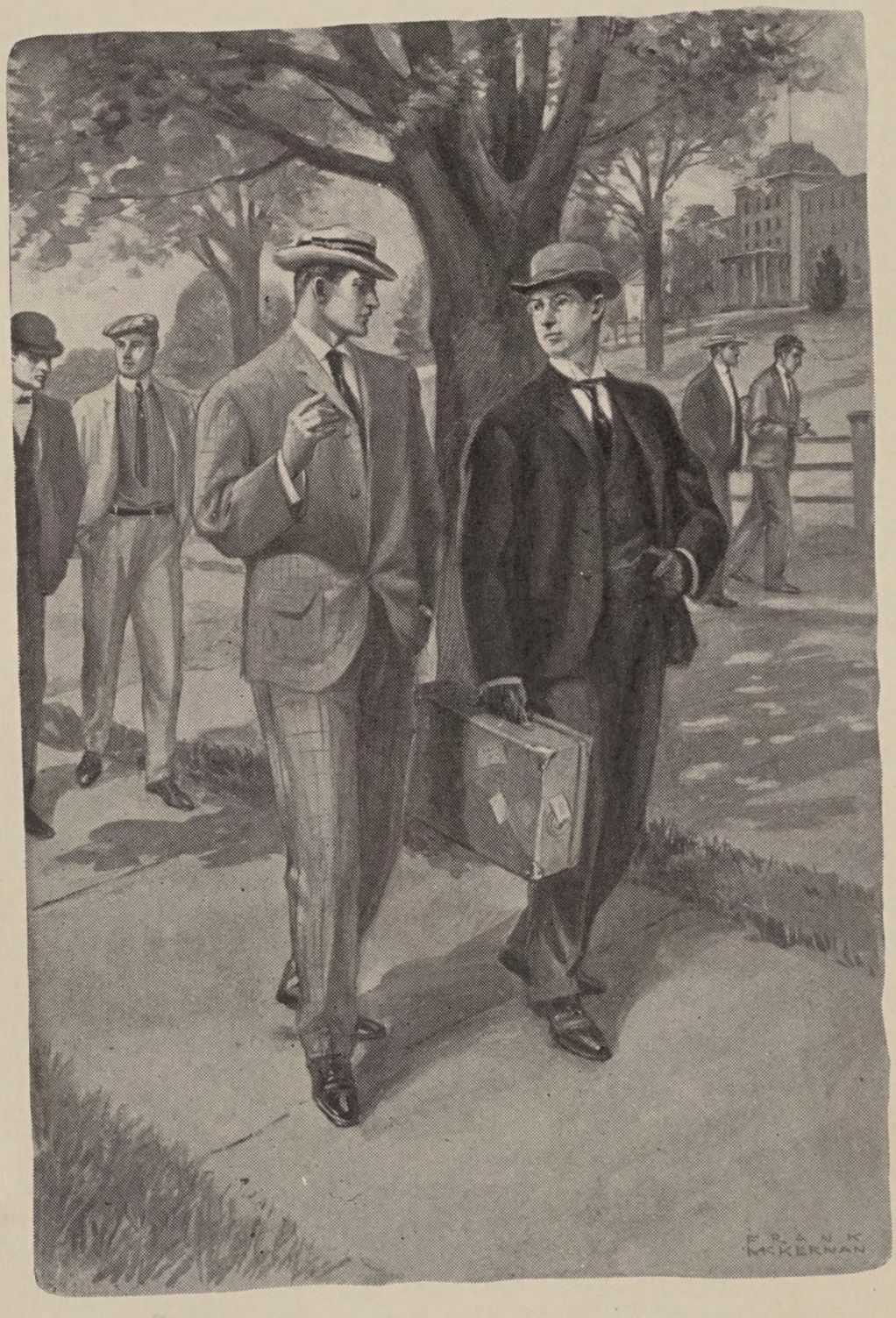

"'Who is Splinter?' inquired his friend quietly."

Page 29.

WINNING HIS DEGREE

BY

EVERETT T. TOMLINSON

AUTHOR OF

"The Ward Hill Series," "The Blue and Buff Series"
"The War of 1812 Series"
"Three Colonial Boys," "The Rider of the Black Horse"
"Winning His 'W,'" etc.

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PREFACE

In this story, as in its predecessors, I have endeavored to give the records of a student neither preternaturally good nor unnaturally bad. Freshman year has usually been made the basis of college stories. The pranks and escapades of that time of trial have provided well-nigh unending subjects in which many have been interested. The work, struggles, and experiences of an upper classman, however, have been seldom recorded, and in this tale I have gone into pathways largely left by most writers of school and college stories. The life of a college junior (and senior) contains so much that is interesting, the experiences are so attractive, that I have ventured in this book to enter into some of them. If the lesson of the lessons, and the unwritten, but no less real problems faced and grappled with shall lead my young readers into a little clearer perception of "what it is all for," the writer will feel that his labor has not been in vain.

Everett T. Tomlinson.

Elizabeth, N. J.

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

PAGE

"'Who is Splinter?' inquired his friend quietly." Frontispiece. 29

"'Have some cream, Mr. Phelps?' called Mott from his place on the table" 79

"'I don't see why you say that,' replied Mott reproachfully" . 102

"'But—but—but—my dear woman, I haven't any butter for sale'" 124

"'My second point,' he continued after a brief and effective pause, 'is this'" 168

"'Yes, now I understand just what a touchdown is,' continued Miss Stone" 178

"'I took it out of my vest when I put on my sweater this afternoon'" 196

"'You can take Miss Stone back, anyway, and that's the main thing'" 221

"'That's the end of that,' he said to himself grimly as he watched the paper curl" 230

"When it once more came Will's turn to receive he stepped farther back" 258

"Out in the canoe . . . the interest of either did not flag" . 285

"'I see what you mean. Thank you for your good words. Good night'" 301

CONTENTS

CHAPTER		PAGE
I.	The Return	11
II.	A New Acquaintance	21
III.	An Informal Call	31
IV.	A Proposition	41
V.	Proverbial Wisdom	50
VI.	A Disappearance at the President's House	60
VII.	In the Freshman's Room	70
VIII.	The Class Meeting	79
IX.	An Election	89
X.	The Rapid, Rounded, Rolling Orb	99
XI.	Realism	109
XII.	Butter of Kine	118
XIII.	Will's Assistance	127
XIV.	The Result of an Interview	137
XV.	The Freshman's Warning	147
XVI.	The Preliminary Debate	157

CHAPTER PAGE

XVII. The Award 167

XVIII. The Game with Alden 176

XIX. A Pointed Interview 185

XX. More Losses 195

XXI. A Deserted House 205

XXII. An Adventure 215

XXIII. A Long Pull 224

XXIV. The Tournament 234

XXV. Fears and Misgivings 244

XXVI. The Singles 254

XXVII. The Doubles 264

XXVIII. An Unexpected Letter 274

XXIX. A Call by Bonnett 283

XXX. The Senior Class Elections 293

XXXI. Conclusion 303

WINNING HIS DEGREE

CHAPTER I

THE RETURN

"I TELL you, Foster, this is great!"

"So I have heard you remark something like ninety and nine times."

"Well, one more won't count, will it? But it *is* great, now isn't it, Foster?"

"It certainly is. I think you've heard me say so often enough to believe that I mean it."

"There isn't a place in the world like Winthrop!"

"Do you mean that as a startling piece of information?"

"No. But you don't get as enthusiastic as you ought to, you know."

"You mean I don't show it in the same way that you do."

"If you felt it, you'd show it. You couldn't help yourself."

Foster Bennett turned to the young man in the car-seat beside him, and the smile on his face betrayed the deep affection he felt for his classmate and room-mate, Will Phelps. For two years they had been

students together in Winthrop College, and now they were returning after the long summer vacation to resume their tasks and enter upon their life as juniors in the college that had become so dear to their hearts. Even in the preparatory school they had been classmates and intimate friends, their homes were in the same little city, and throughout their young lives they had shared their experiences and possessions after the manner of boys. And now they were juniors! The very name of the class to which they belonged brought a thrill to Will's heart, for he was ever impulsive, warm-hearted, enthusiastic, and the more self-contained manner of his roommate he well knew concealed a feeling as deep as that within his own heart, though it seldom manifested itself in the exuberant manner with which Will Phelps was ever wont to display the impulses that swayed him. "He wore his heart upon his sleeve," as he laughingly declared; but the greater dignity of his friend seldom prevented him from displaying his enthusiasm over whatever appealed to his feelings. The dignity of being an upper-classman rested with all due weight upon Will, and he looked forward to the coming experiences with almost as much enthusiasm as that with which he had first come to Winthrop just two years before. It was now about the middle of the afternoon. Early that morning they had left their homes in Sterling, and would be due in Winthrop within an hour. At Peter's Junction there would doubtless be a large number of students to join them

and, as they would arrive at the Junction within a half-hour, Will found himself looking forward with eagerness to the time when he would behold the familiar faces of his classmates and college friends.

The conversation was maintained for the most part by Will, for Foster had listened smilingly to the words of his enthusiastic chum, replying only when occasion seemed to demand. From the windows of the car Will could look out upon the region through which they were passing—a region that had become so familiar to him that he looked upon the sloping hillsides and fertile valleys, and even upon the weather-beaten abodes of the farmers, as he did upon the features of the friends he had made thus far in his college course. They were all a part of his life; in a sense they all belonged to him.

Perhaps unconsciously Will Phelps was beginning to appreciate the truth that all a man can ever truly call his is that which he possesses with his inner life. The deeds to the fertile farm-lands might be recorded in other names, but the sunlight on the summits of the hills, the coloring of the golden grain, the peacefulness of the entire scene were his, though not bought with money. A man may own a library of ten thousand volumes, but all of it that he really possesses is that which he has appropriated by his own reading. Will Phelps had learned many things that had not been outlined in the prescribed course of study, and it may have been that as he gazed from the window of the car, as he was swiftly borne through the familiar

region, that he was dimly aware of some things which he had attained that he could not have explained even to his closest friend, Foster Bennett.

In a moment, however, his meditations were broken in upon by the nasal call of the trainman, "Peter's Junction! Peter's Junction! All out for Peter's Junction! Change cars for Mesopotamia, Paris, Conkling's Four Corners." An indescribable jargon of the names of other towns was added to the list, and at last, as the rumbling train came to a standstill, breathless he returned to his first declaration: "Peter's Junction! Peter's Junction! All out for Peter's Junction. This train for Tenton, Winthrop, Bakersville and Jordan!"

Will waited to hear no more, but leaping into the aisle, with a call to his friend to hold his seat for him, he swiftly made his way toward the platform. Already he had obtained a glimpse of the thronging crowd of college boys that was to be seen there waiting for the arrival of the incoming train, and the noisy shouts and cheers had sounded like music in his ears.

With a rush the horde boarded the train, shouting their words of welcome as some classmate was recognized, and Will Phelps, after he had grasped the outstretched hand of many whom he loudly greeted, quickly returned to his seat beside Foster. Some of the students were standing in the aisle, and directly beside the seat in which the two juniors were was a tall, heavy, powerful young man whom Will instantly recognized as Wilkins, the captain of the baseball

nine a year before. A member of the same fraternity to which both Will and Foster belonged, they had come to know him well, and a shout of greeting went up as they reached forth and dragged him down to a seat on the rail beside them.

Wilkins, phlegmatic, good-natured, imperturbable, laughingly responded to their demonstrations and at once took the place to which they had dragged him.

"Why, Wilkins, old man, how did you happen to be here?" demanded Will. "It is as good as a prescription to set eyes on you again. Better, I've no doubt, than any prescription you could write." Wilkins for the past year had been a student in a famous medical school, which explained to those who knew, the reference the enthusiastic junior made in his greeting.

"I'd like to prescribe once for you, Will. Just once. One would be enough," responded the hero. There was a drawl in his words that was at once a characteristic of the young man and the delight of his friends.

"I'd almost be willing to take it if you were only to be back in Winthrop with us."

"No. I've put away childish things. I've finished my course. I've just come up for a day or two to see how you kids will run things."

"You stay and you'll see, all right!" laughed Will.

"How's Splinter?" inquired Wilkins, his eyes twinkling as he referred to one of the professors by the name by which the teacher was known among the

students,[1] though it must be acknowledged that this "title" did not appear on the pages of the college catalogue. As Will Phelps had had troubles of his own with the man referred to, he understood at once the implication in his friend's query.

"He's all right," responded Will lightly. "At least he was last June. I haven't seen him since, and I don't correspond with him. I've done with him, but I sha'n't hold any grudge against him. He can't help himself, so I don't blame him."

"Good of you, Will," drawled Wilkins.

"Of course it's good of me. I can't help that, either. It's the way I was born."

"I want to tell you, though, you kid junior, that you'll think his work was play, just play, when you get into the medical school."

"I sha'n't get in there unless some of you sharks drag me in to find out with your knives and things what my lungs are made of and if my nervous system is built on the proper plan."

"Speaking of nerves——" drawled Wilkins.

"Yes. What of them?" demanded Will.

"Would you fellows say I had any nerves?"

"Nerves? Nerves? You're all nerves, Wilkins, a huge nerve. You're just nerve and *praeterea nihil.*"

"Listen to the kid!" laughed Wilkins. "Is that supposed to be Latin?"

"You wouldn't know if I told you. But it is Latin, and good Latin too!"

---

[1] See "Winning His 'W.'"

"I'll take your word for it. But honestly, do you fellows think I have any nerves?"

"Why?" said Foster.

"Because some of the fellows in the medical school say I haven't."

"They don't know you, then. Send them up here to Winthrop and we can give them a point or two," said Will.

"I might have done that, but they took another way to find out," said Wilkins slowly. His round face was expressionless, but both boys knew at once that he had some experience to relate, and so Will said quickly, "Tell us about it, Willie." As Wilkins weighed two hundred and thirty pounds, the pet name by which the giant had been known among his fellows became almost ludicrous. But the names "Willie" and "Little Willie" had tenaciously clung to him throughout his college days.

"Why, all there is of it is that some of the boys declared I hadn't a nerve in my body, but some didn't appear to agree with them, so one night they decided to put it to a test and find out."

"Did they find out?" inquired Foster.

"They did," replied Wilkins soberly.

"What did they do? How did they find out?"

"Oh, I was doing some extra work in the dissecting room——"

"Horrible!" interrupted Will.

"What's horrible?" demanded Wilkins sharply. "If you mean the way some of the fellows did it, why,

it certainly was. If you mean the dissecting itself, why, I can tell you it's the most wonderful, the most beautiful thing in the world."

"I'll take your word for it," said Will quickly. "Go on with your story."

"We'd had a fresh subject sent in. It was the body of a chap who had pulled too hard on the end of a rope and overdone the matter, so to speak."

"Do you mean he had been *hanged?*" demanded Will, aghast.

"That's what some people vulgarly term it, I understand. At any rate, there was the subject on the table, and I received special permission to do some work on it the evening after it came."

"You *wanted* to do it? You don't mean to say you wanted to do it?"

"Of course I did. That's what I was there for, wasn't it? I tell you, my kid friend, men don't go to a medical school to shirk. They go there to work. And they have to work too! Well, some of my friends found out what was going on, and they thought they'd test my nerve."

"You didn't know anything about it?" inquired Foster.

"Not a word. They got into the room before I did and they rigged up some wires on that subject. 'Twas a shame. I don't believe in treating even the corpse of a man that had been hanged in such a way as that."

"But you'd cut it up."

"Why, yes. Surely I would! That's what I was

there for, wasn't it? Well, those fellows rigged their wires just as they wanted to and then they all left just before I came, all except one, and he crawled under a table in the room to stay and find out about my nerves. I put on my uniform and got to work right away; but before I'd fairly begun, all at once the right arm of the poor fellow shot right up from the table and then fell back with a thud."

"What did you do, then?"

"I took the arm and put it back in place, and when I began again the other arm shot right up just as the other one had done."

"Didn't you quit then?" demanded Will.

"'Quit'? No. Why should I quit? I put it back where it belonged and then I began again. In about a minute—I think the fellow under the table was beginning to get a trifle impatient, for he gave the wire such a jerk—the arm went up again, and when it fell it dropped right on the back of my neck and stayed there."

"Quit, Wilkins! You've told enough," said Will hastily.

"Go on, Willie! I want to hear it all," suggested Foster. "What did you do?"

"I was bending over the table, of course, when the thing happened; but I reached up and put the arm back in its place. I believe too, that I indulged in some remarks. At least that's my recollection," said Wilkins, not a muscle of his impassive face moving as he spoke.

"What did you say?" inquired Will, whose interest had again been aroused.

"To the best of my belief and recollection, I delivered an apostrophe to the late departed. I said, 'Look here, old man, don't you know that isn't any way to act in here? You're the worst-behaved subject I've ever carved yet. I don't wonder that you were hanged. I'd help do it myself. Now will you be good or shall I be compelled to resort to corporal punishment?'"

"Was it good?"

"Quiet as a mouse. You see, I'd found the wire, and then I understood what was going on. I didn't pretend to let on that I knew, but I saw it led to the place under the table. I happened to know the table had been broken that day and wouldn't stand much, so I sauntered over to it and sat down upon it."

"What happened then?" said Foster.

"Why, it went down with a bang, and I found myself sitting on something or somebody that was squirming and yelling good. 'Hello!' I said. 'Here's another one of those live dead men. I'll put you on the table with your friend here and see if you'll not behave better than he did when I begin.' But do you know, before I could get my hands on him he let out a yell you could have heard half a mile away and bolted out the door. Do you know," Wilkins added soberly, "I've had my suspicions that that second chap wasn't really dead? He was really more alive than he thought he was. But he wouldn't wait for me to find out."

CHAPTER II

A NEW ACQUAINTANCE

THE gruesome story which Wilkins had related without a change in the expression of his stolid face at another time might have aroused a different feeling in the heart of Will Phelps, but the boyish laughter and the shouts of the college boys, who appeared to have taken possession of the car as if it was theirs by divine right, created an atmosphere in which it was impossible for any one to take a morose or despondent view of life. Both Foster and Will laughed heartily at the tale, and the latter said:

"They won't try it again, Willie! Did you have to operate on the poor chap you sat upon?"

"Not yet. My time will come, though. I've learned to wait. 'Everything comes to him who waits,' you know."

"He won't wait for you," laughed Will.

"Oh, yes, he will," responded Wilkins. "He knows I'm waiting for him and he'll just have to wait for my time. He can't do anything else, you see."

"Do you really enjoy the work?" inquired Foster seriously.

"It's the greatest work in all the world," replied Wilkins. "Why, just take the human hand——"

"Whose hand?" demanded Will demurely.

"Mine. Yours. Anybody's. It's the most wonderful piece of mechanism in all the world. I've got a lance in my pocket, and if you'll kindly place your hand in mine I'll show you a thing or two."

"Take Foster's," suggested Will with a laugh, as he hastily drew his own hand back. "I'll be as generous with him as Artemas Ward was with all his wife's relations when there was a call for men to enlist."

"I won't hurt you," persisted Wilkins soberly.

"Not if the court understands itself," replied Will.

"Say, Will," said Wilkins, abruptly changing the subject, "wasn't Mott a close friend of yours when he was in college?"

"You mean Jack Mott that left college last year, at the invitation of the faculty?"

"Yes. I met him last night in New York, and he told me he was one of the closest friends you had when he was here."

"He certainly was 'close,'" said Will with a laugh. "I asked him to lend me the loan of five dollars once, and the way in which he said 'No' made me believe he certainly was 'close,' if that's what you mean."

"Not exactly," replied Wilkins. "He said——"

"Oh, I know what he said," interrupted Will. "I can give you the whole story just as he told it to you. Yes, he was a 'close' friend. He couldn't put it too strongly, either. Why, do you know, he not only wouldn't lend me five dollars that time when I asked for it, but he even got Peter John Schenck to go down

to Tommie's and have a lot of pies and cakes charged up to my account. And once he and Peter John even had the nerve to come up to my room and treat me with some of the pies he had just got at Tommie's and had had charged to me. Oh, yes, he was a 'close' enough friend."

"He'd have done almost as well as you, Willie, in the dissecting room," suggested Foster, laughing loudly as he spoke.

"Oh, you could have put him on the table and not been able to cut through his epidermis. The fellow was so 'close' he'd never give up even in a quarrel. He wouldn't give up anything."

"Yes, he would," suggested Foster.

"What, I'd like to know?" inquired Will sharply, turning to his roommate.

"Well, if I recollect aright, he had an elongated lingual appendage, and there wasn't a fellow in college freer with it than he was."

"An abnormal labial development too?" said Wilkins soberly.

"Precisely. He was generous with it too, to a fault," replied Foster.

"What about him?" inquired Will. "What made you speak of him? Was it just because he declared he was one of my 'closest' friends? He certainly was, if that's all there was to it."

"That wasn't all," said Wilkins, standing up in the aisle and fumbling in his pockets as he spoke. "Ah, yes, here it is. As I told you, I met him last

night in New York, and when I told him I was coming up to Winthrop for a day or two, to be here when the year opened, he told me about you. He really seemed to have a good warm feeling for you too, as far as I could judge. At all events, he went into the library of the house where we were, and pretty soon he came out with a letter which he wanted me to give to you. Here it is," added Wilkins as he held forth the missive to which he had referred.

"Thank you. I'm highly honored," laughed Will as he thrust the envelope in his own pocket. "I'll read it later when my nerves are stronger."

"He wasn't all bad," suggested Foster.

"I didn't say he was, did I?" retorted Will. "My sole remark was about his 'close' friendship. Ditto the development of his nerve. I say, Willie, what's the scientific term for nerve?"

"I haven't got as far as that yet," drawled Wilkins.

"Well, when you do, then let me know. You have to learn all the Latin terms, don't you?"

"We're supposed to."

"And some are in Greek too, aren't they?"

"Yes. Some of them are 'all Greek' to me."

"Same here," laughed Will. "I'd shake if I wasn't afraid to put my hand in that capacious receptacle of yours, even for a minute. But I never could see for my part what the old fellows wanted to give names in Latin or Greek to such trifling little matters as our bones or nerves for."

"It's so that all the world can know."

"That must be it," laughed Will. "'Language was devised to conceal thought.'"

"No, it's all right," persisted Wilkins soberly. "You see, Latin is a sort of universal language, and the American and Englishman, the Frenchman and the German can all understand what's meant if it's in Latin."

"Oh, I see. I see perfectly. I had some botany last spring. Oh, not enough to hurt me," Will hastily added with a laugh, as an expression of mock seriousness appeared on the face of Wilkins. "We had a lot of scientific terms to learn, mostly Latin, I think, though a few were in Choctaw and some in Portuguese. When we had done up the term's work and looked back over the wreck of time, I confess that I felt a little like Bud Willoughby—you know him, don't you? He's a junior now."

"Yes, I remember him. What was it he said?"

"Oh, yes. I'd almost forgotten about that. Well, Bud fell in with me on our way to the exam. last spring, and he was fearfully down too. He said he'd been up almost all the night trying to fix a few of those botanical terms in his mind, but for the life of him all that he could recall were the *aurora borealis* and the *delirium tremens*."

"He passed all right, didn't he?" inquired Wilkins soberly.

"Yes. He just got through."

"How was it with you, Will?"

"Will got a B.," said Foster promptly. "One might think to hear Will talk that he didn't do any work, but he's going to be one of the high-stand men in the class before we graduate."

"'Future conditional sentence, less vivid form,' as my distinguished preceptor, Doctor Splinter, would remark," laughed Will, though his face flushed slightly at the words of his friend.

"That's all right, Will. You're not such a fool—"

"As I appear to be?" interrupted Will with a laugh.

"You're not such a fool as not to understand what you're in Winthrop for," said Wilkins. "You may well remember the advice of one of the alumni—that's *me,* I'd have you know—that the fellow who doesn't learn to work when he is in college is the fellow who doesn't learn afterwards. Oh, I know what you're going to say," Wilkins added hastily as he perceived that Will was about to interrupt him. "I know all about the stuff that's talked, but you mark my words, my youthful friend! When you arrive at my exalted position, and look back and look down on the various and varied permutations and combinations of undergraduate life, you too will understand what I am saying. A fellow is here for business. That's what I mean."

"We're *here,* anyway," retorted Will quickly, as he perceived that the train was slowly approaching the station at Winthrop.

In a moment the car was filled with confusion as

the entire student body arose and every boy, his hands filled with bags or bundles, made a rush for the exit. Almost as if it had been the work of magic the cars were emptied and a noisy body of students was shouting, calling, saluting on the crowded platform of the little station.

"Come on, fellows!" called Will to his two friends. "Let's walk up."

"That's right," responded Wilkins. "Here, take my baggage checks, will you, and have my bags sent up to the house along with your trunks?"

"All right," responded Will hastily, taking Foster's checks as well as those of Wilkins and his own, and rushing toward an expressman he discovered in the crowd.

In a brief time he returned to the spot where his friends were awaiting him, and as he elbowed his way to them he called out, "That's one of the things a fellow has to be thankful for."

"What thing?" inquired Wilkins.

"That he's a junior and has learned how to get his baggage up to the house. See the poor freshmen." As he spoke Will pointed derisively at the mob of students, many of whom seemed to be at a total loss as to what they were to do or where they were to go.

"Stop and help them, Will. You're a junior now and must stand by the freshmen."

"I'll stand by them. Lucky if I don't have to be sat on for them too. Come on."

As they turned into the street that led toward the

colleges Will for the first time was aware that there had been an addition to their party. The fourth member of the group was a smooth-faced, rosy-cheeked young man, short and thick-set in figure and with an expression of extreme good nature upon his round face. Will had been introduced to him, but had failed to understand what his name was. As the two fell in behind Foster and Wilkins, Will turned to his companion and said pleasantly:

"I didn't understand what your name was."

"Brown," responded his companion.

"Yes. I've heard that name before," laughed Will. "I think there were twenty-one fellows in college last year named Brown."

"Then one more won't count," laughed the stranger.

"Oh, it'll count all right," said Will lightly. "That is," he added magnanimously, "it will if *you* make it count. Everything depends, in college life, you know, on what you make yourself worth to the college." The full sense of his own position and dignity as a junior in Winthrop was upon Will Phelps, but he was minded to be helpful to the newcomers, and the unconscious condescension in his manner and tone toward his companion was marked, though he himself was not aware of it.

"So I have heard," replied his new friend dryly.

"Ever been here before?"

"Never."

"You'll soon get used to it and you'll like it as well

as we do. I have been here two years now and I know what I'm talking about. You may have a bit of trouble with Splinter, but you don't need to mind it much. I had trouble with him when I was a freshman, but I've lived through it." And Will laughed lightly as he spoke.

"Who is Splinter?" inquired his friend quietly.

"I thought everybody knew Splinter. He has the freshmen in Greek. But don't you worry about him. You'll get along all right." There was a quizzical expression in his companion's face that was slightly disconcerting, but ignoring it, Will continued, "Of course, the life here will be all new to you, and there's nothing like having a friend at court. You come to me when you're in trouble and I'll help you out."

"Thank you."

"Where did you prepare for college?"

"At St. Peter's."

"Good school," remarked Will sagely. "Some of our best men came from St. Peter's. I'll introduce you to some of them later if you want me to."

"Thank you."

"I'll have to leave you here," continued Will as they arrived at the street that led to his fraternity house, where he was to room for the coming year. "I'll see you again soon. Let me know if I can help you in any way. Good-bye." After shaking hands with his new friend cordially, Will soon rejoined Wilkins and Foster, who had gone on toward the house they were seeking.

"Know who that was, Will?" inquired Wilkins, a grin spreading over his face.

"He said his name was Brown. He's a mighty nice fellow and I'm going to look him up soon."

"Do so! Do so by all means! He's Doctor Brown, the new assistant professor of history, and I am sure he will appreciate your interest in him."

CHAPTER III

AN INFORMAL CALL

FOR a moment Will Phelps stared blankly at his two companions, ignoring the laugh in which both were heartily indulging, and then gazed ruefully at the youthful form of the new professor, who could still be seen in the distance.

"I never would have believed it," he murmured at last. "Did you say, Willie, that he was to have history?"

"Yea, verily."

"And I had elected history," said Will dolefully, a smile appearing for a moment on his woebegone countenance. "I don't believe I'm as much interested in that department as I thought I was. I've a notion to take Greek instead, for Splinter won't be as hard with me as this Doctor Brown now."

"Nonsense, Will! You'll come out all right. It was a perfectly natural mistake," said Foster.

"That's so," joined in Wilkins. "I know him, and I haven't any doubt he's laughing over the matter now as much as we are."

"Much as *you* are, you mean. It isn't any laughing matter to me, I can tell you," remarked Phelps in such a doleful manner that his two friends broke forth in renewed laughter. "What'll he think of me, any-

way? There I was, asking him at what school he had prepared for college and offering to steer him clear of the pitfalls of freshman year at Winthrop!"

"Never mind, old man. He won't lay it up against you. He laughs about it himself, and he has told me how, every year since his graduation from college, when he went back, somebody always took him for a freshman. He's used to it and he won't think a bit the less of you for it. Don't lay it to heart. You'll come out all right."

"He does look young, anyway," suggested Will.

"An infant in arms," assented Wilkins; "that is, till you reach his caput, and then you think he's a man and a half. And he's as good a fellow as he is brainy too," added the alumnus cheerfully.

"Well, all I can say is that I've learned something, that's all," asserted Will. "The next time I'll wait before I begin to scatter my offers of help so freely."

"We live to learn," remarked Wilkins. "But I think I'd be willing to give up my last dollar to be present the first time you go into his classes." And Wilkins' hearty laugh was joined in by Foster, and even Will Phelps himself was compelled to share in a measure in the mirth of his comrades.

However, he did not speak, and soon all three had arrived at their destination. It was vastly different now, returning to college and finding their rooms in readiness for them, from what it had been when they had first entered college two years before this time. Others of their classmates were in the house to wel-

come them, and in the joy of the noisy reunion Will obtained a slight relief from the depression that had followed his interview with the new professor.

When the boys had eaten their dinner, Will Phelps did not join the noisy group that had assembled about the piano and were joining in the college songs that threatened to awake the echoes among the "purple hills." He had formed a sudden resolution, and without saying a word even to Foster he quietly took his hat and slipped out of the house.

Swiftly he walked along the tree-bordered streets, on past the colleges, from the windows of which many gleaming lights now could be seen, until at last he arrived in front of the house in which Wilkins had told him Doctor Brown was to live. Fearful that his resolution might fail him, he ran swiftly up the steps of the piazza and gave a vicious pull upon the door-bell, thus preventing all possibility of a retreat.

He could hear the footsteps of the maid coming in response to his summons, and for an instant there was a thought of flight in Will's heart, but summoning all his powers of resolution to his aid, he waited to be admitted. It seemed to him that the maid was almost intentionally adding to his torture she was so slow in her movements. The lock creaked loudly, the door slowly opened, and Will saw before him a woman middle-aged and apparently not pleased to behold the visitor.

"Is Mr. Splint—is Doctor Brown in?" inquired Will in some confusion.

"There ain't no doctor lives here," replied the woman stolidly.

"Why, I thought Doctor Brown, one of the new professors in the college, boarded here," said Will quickly. "I was told that he did."

"There's a new boarder," assented the woman, who had not as yet bidden Will enter. "I guess he ain't no doctor, though. He's just a student."

"What is his name?"

"I dunno."

"He may be the man I'm looking for," urged Will. "Will you please inquire?"

"What d'ye say his name was?" inquired the woman grudgingly.

"Brown—Doctor Brown."

"I'll see. You stay where you be," suggested the woman suspiciously. It was evident that her confidence in the student body at Winthrop and the refining effects of study were not without their limits. However, she did not close the door, and Will waited patiently until he heard her returning through the hall.

"Yes," she said in response to Will's question, "he boards here."

"Is he in?"

"No. He's out."

"Thank you. I'll call again."

"You're welcome," responded the woman as she hastily closed the door.

Will turned away from the piazza and started

toward the gate, but before he arrived at it he perceived some one entering, and almost instinctively he was convinced that he knew who it was. An impulse to escape was quickly mastered, and excitedly he stopped and waited for the man to come nearer. One glance, even in the dim light of the evening, was sufficient to convince him that the man he had been seeking was now before him.

"Good evening, Doctor Brown," called Will.

"Good evening," responded the professor pleasantly, but plainly unaware who it was that had addressed him. "Ah, Phelps, I'm glad to see you. Will you come in?" he added as soon as he recognized the junior.

"I think I will, doctor," responded Will. "I came down on purpose to see you."

"That was good of you."

Will laughed lightly, but made no other response as he followed the professor into the house. Doctor Brown had taken a key from his pocket and unlocked the door, and when both had entered he once more closed the door and then bade Will follow him as he went up the stairs to his own room. The room itself was in confusion, books, boxes, pictures and clothing being scattered about in manifest disorder. The professor, however, offered no apology, but as soon as he had removed a promiscuous pile of books from one of the chairs invited his visitor to be seated, meanwhile taking his own seat on a small table. It was so unconventional, the entire affair, so like what

might have occurred had Doctor Brown been one of the students, as Will had taken him to be, that the junior quickly felt more at ease, and there was no evidence of embarrassment in his voice as he said:

"I've come down, doctor, to apologize for my mistake this afternoon."

"What mistake?" inquired the professor quietly.

"Why—you see—I know," stammered Will, thrown into confusion again, "I thought you were one of us. I didn't quite catch your name when I was introduced to you this afternoon, and I'm afraid I acted a good deal like—like—a—a—fool!" he at last blurted out.

Doctor Brown's face had a quizzical expression upon it, as Will could see by the lamplight, but there was a tremor in his voice as he said, "Perhaps it would be better, Mr. Phelps, if you were a little more definite."

"Why, the truth is, I didn't know that you were one of the faculty. I thought you were one of—the——"

"Freshmen?" suggested the professor.

"Why—I don't know—not that exactly—I fancy I did——"

The hearty laugh of the young teacher rang out as he said, "The mistake was a natural one, Phelps. You are not the first one to make it, either. Some people are said to be eager to appear younger than they are, but for myself I think it would be an advantage to appear at least as old as I really am. Put it right out of your mind and don't let it trouble you in the least! I understood the situation, and I con-

fess I was looking forward with interest to the time when you should first see me in the classroom. You have spoiled that for me," laughed the young man. "But you are going to elect history, are you not?" he added.

"Yes, *sir!*" responded Will emphatically. "I was going to, but I would now, whether I had planned to or not. You must have thought me a cad to talk to you as I did," he added ruefully.

"Not at all. All that you said was just in the line of what I expected of you."

"'Expected of me'?"

"Yes. You're not such a stranger to me as you may have thought you were."

"I don't think I ever met you before," said Will blankly.

"You hadn't."

"I don't see then——"

The young professor laughed, evidently enjoying the junior's confusion; but his laughter was so contagious that Will himself was compelled to join, though he had no understanding as to its cause.

"Marc Whitney was a classmate of mine," said Doctor Brown.

"Is that so?" exclaimed Will. "He's one of the best men I ever knew." Will's enthusiasm over the young principal of the high school in which he had prepared for college was so strong that any reference to him was certain to bring forth a most cordial response.

"Yes, we were together three weeks this summer. He had much to tell me about you."

"I trust he didn't tell you all he knew about me," laughed Will a trifle uneasily.

"He certainly had good things to say. If you never fall into the hands of any one who has a lower estimate of you, you may count yourself fortunate."

"Thank you. I don't think I ever felt toward any one as I did toward him," responded Will softly; "that is, any one except my father," he added.

Again the young professor laughed pleasantly and said, "Marc—I mean Mr. Whitney," he hastily corrected himself—"told me about a good many things that happened in your school career, but that little story about 'Brother Marc' or 'Mar(c)k the Good Man,' I've forgotten just which he called it, impressed me most of all."

"Yes, I remember it perfectly,"[1] responded Will eagerly. "I haven't done anything very startling in college, but what little I have done I know I owe to him—and my father. He's one of the best friends I ever had."

"Perhaps you can make two," said the young professor. "We'll hope so, anyway, Phelps. I want you to be free to run in and see me informally any time."

"Do you mean it?" said Will eagerly.

"Of course I mean it," laughed Doctor Brown.

"Thank you. When I come too often you must tell me."

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[1] See "The Winner."

On his way back to his room Will's enthusiasm manifested itself in many ways. Despite the dignity that became an upper-classman he whistled and sang (loudly if not in tune), and when he ran up the steps of his fraternity house he was greeted with a shout "to make less noise."

"Did you see him?" inquired Wilkins.

"I did that! He's a daisy! He has some red blood in his veins. Not much like Splinter."

"What do you mean? Who is it that you are talking about?" demanded Wilkins.

"You know as well as I do."

"Well, I'm referring to Bonnett."

"Has he been here?" demanded Will quickly. Bonnett was one of his classmates and one of the shrewdest political manipulators in the entire student body. A visit from him therefore implied, at this time in the term, a matter of more than ordinary importance. "Did he say what he wanted?" he inquired after a brief pause.

"I thought you said you saw him."

"I didn't mean Bonnett. I was thinking of some one else."

"Well, there is some one else here to see you too."

"Who is it?"

"I don't know. He's waiting in the reception room. He looks like another freshman, but I advise you to be careful. One can never tell, you know," laughed Wilkins.

Will Phelps turned about and hastily made his way

to the room where he had been informed some one was awaiting him. When he entered he beheld a boy apparently about sixteen years of age. He was well dressed and there were evidences about him that betokened a certain air of refinement, and when he rose from the chair in which he had been seated the face he turned toward Will seemed somehow strangely familiar.

"Were you waiting to see me?" inquired Will pleasantly as he advanced with his hand extended.

"Is this Mr. Phelps?"

"People sometimes call me by that name."

"Then here is something for you," and as the lad spoke he drew from his pocket a letter which he at once handed to Will. Hastily tearing it open, Will glanced at the contents, and before he read the letter through he turned again in surprise to his visitor.

CHAPTER IV

A PROPOSITION

"THEN you are young Mott, are you?" inquired Will cordially.

"Yes, sir."

"Keep your seat, Mott," said Will lightly, for his visitor had risen and remained standing, evidently somewhat impressed by the fact that he was addressing an upper-classman. "I'm glad to see you. Hold on a minute. I've a letter here I want to read. It may concern you."

The letter which Wilkins had given him on the train had remained in Will's coat pocket forgotten until this moment. Drawing it forth, he hastily tore open the envelope and read the following letter:

NEW YORK, Sept. 15, 19—.

MY DEAR PHELPS:

I want to commend to your care my kid brother, who enters college this fall. He is a good boy, at least as far as I know, and you may think it strange in view of my own record at Winthrop that I want to keep him so. I know I've been no example for him to follow, but I never pretended to be. I can be like a sign-board, can't I, and point out the right way even if I don't walk in it myself? The kid hasn't had much of a show at home. His father—well, I won't go into details in the matter of the family history,

and if I recollect aright I think I gave you in my own student (?) days a little picture of what goes on in my ancestral abode. But I don't want the kid to go wrong. And he will, as sure as fate, if some one doesn't keep an eye on him. It's in his blood. Now, honestly, Phelps, there isn't a fellow I know that I would rather have the boy with than with you. I don't want you to burden yourself with him, but if you can and will take a little interest in the forlorn little chap, you'll be doing as much good as if you had gone out to preach to the little heathen in Timbuctoo. Will you do it? I don't ask it for myself, but for the kid. You needn't take the time or trouble to answer this begging letter, but if you will only take a little oversight of Alfred he'll be almost as grateful as I shall be, which is saying about all that it is in my power to say.

Good-bye, old fellow. Take a good lesson from the error of my ways. As ever,

MOTT.

Will Phelps read the letter through twice before he looked up at the freshman before him. It was asking much of him to accede to Mott's request, but the pathetic figure of the lad appealed strongly to him, and there was no mistaking the cordiality in his tones when he said:

"How long have you been here, Mott?"

"A week, Mr. Phelps."

"Taking your entrance exams.?"

"Yes, sir."

"I trust you passed them all," laughed Will.

"I passed all but one, Mr. Phelps."

"What was that?"

"Greek history."

"What was the trouble with that?" inquired Will.

"The trouble wasn't with the examination, but with me, I guess," replied young Mott ruefully. "Still, I don't think I ought to have been conditioned."

"That's what they all say."

"But, honestly, Mr. Phelps," said Mott eagerly, "let me tell you. One of the questions, though it wasn't exactly in the form of a question either, was, 'State what you know about Themistocles.'"

"Did you do it?"

"Yes, sir, I did. I told all I knew, and it didn't take but two lines to do it either. But I answered the question, anyway. I stated 'all I knew' about Themistocles. That answered the question, didn't it? Of course, I didn't know very much, but how much I knew wasn't the question I was asked. I answered the question, anyway, and I don't think I ought to be conditioned, for I did what was asked of me, didn't I, Mr. Phelps?"

"You'll do. You'll get along in Winthrop all right. I have a letter here from your brother asking me to do what I could for you. I don't think you'll need much help from me, though. You'll be able to look out for yourself."

"Thank you, Mr. Phelps. But I don't think so. I hope you'll do what my brother says in his letter."

"Of course I will! Come and see me whenever you're in trouble—or when you're not," Will added

with a laugh. There was something attractive about the boy that appealed strongly to him, though the letter of his elder brother of itself would not have moved him, he felt so strongly against the man who had been expelled from college at the end of his sophomore year.

"Thank you, Mr. Phelps. But, Mr. Phelps——"

"Look here, freshman," laughed Will, "you needn't put the title on me yet awhile. We don't 'mister' anybody in Winthrop, not even the faculty. I'm just plain Phelps, you understand."

"Well, plain Phelps——" began Mott demurely.

"That'll do. I'll make you go back to the 'mister' if you try that game," interrupted Will. "Where do you room, freshman?"

"In North Hall."

"Why did you go in there?" inquired Will quickly, and in a moment he regretted having asked the question. North Hall was an old dormitory and decidedly out of repair. The rooms too were undesirable, and the students who roomed there as a rule were those who came from homes where the struggles to provide means for the pursuit of learning in Winthrop were of the hardest. As he thought of Mott, with his abundance of money and lavish ways, he was puzzled to account for his younger brother having taken up his abode in North instead of the more luxurious quarters occupied by his elder.

"My brother wanted me to. He thought I'd be more likely to study there. He said most of the students that roomed there came to college to work."

"They do," assented Will cordially, believing that he understood the motive now and heartily approving it—at least approving the place for others than himself.

"But, Mr. Phelps——" persisted Mott.

"Plain Phelps," laughed Will.

"Do you really think I ought to have been conditioned in my Greek history?"

"That was one of Splinter's questions. He never hits anything directly—except freshmen."

"'Splinter'? Who is he?"

"That's the pet name for the professor of Greek. You'll understand when you see him."

"Is he hard?"

"As nails."

"I'll have to take my chances then, I suppose."

"Don't take any chances. Put in your best work. Work is the only thing that counts with Splinter, and sometimes that doesn't seem to count as it ought to." Will began with a feeling of righteousness as he recalled his own experiences with the man, but the feeling vanished before the sentence was completed. "Let me know when I can help you, and come and see me again."

The hint was sufficient to cause the freshman to arise, and as he departed he assured Will in such a positive manner that his invitations would be accepted that the junior's heart almost misgave him. Perhaps the position of adviser would prove to be more difficult than at first he had thought. He accompanied

his visitor to the door, and as he bade him good night he perceived some one coming up the piazza steps whom he quickly recognized as Bonnett, the classmate who had called to see him during his absence in the earlier part of the evening.

"Hello, Bonnett," he called cheerily. "I'm mighty glad to see you. When did you come back?"

"Day before yesterday," replied Bonnett as he grasped his classmate's hand.

"You were here before, this evening, to see me, I hear."

"Yes. And I want to see you too."

"Well, here I am," laughed Will. "Not very much to see, but what there is you're welcome to. Come in!"

"No, I don't want to come in. Get your hat, Phelps, and come with me. I want to say something to you which I don't want all Winthrop to hear. We'll take a walk up the street."

"All right. Be with you in a minute," responded Will as he darted into the house.

He soon returned and accompanied his classmate as they turned into one of the more quiet and unfrequented streets of the village. They conversed about many topics—the size of the incoming class, the prospects of the football team, the regret over the decision not to return to college of some of their warmest friends; but all the time Will Phelps was aware that the supreme purpose for which Bonnett had invited him to walk had not been touched upon. Aware as he

was of his classmate's skill in manipulating college affairs and of his influence in the class, his feeling of curiosity naturally became stronger during the delay; but he wisely held his peace, waiting for his companion to broach the subject, whatever it might be. For Will was in complete ignorance as to what was in Bonnett's mind, though he was positive that something definite and clearly defined was there, and in a measure he was flattered by the evident interest and attentions of his classmate.

"I say, Phelps," inquired Bonnett casually at last, "when is it we hold our meeting for the election of class officers?"

Will laughed quietly, assured that his companion was now approaching the true purpose of the interview. "That's a good one, Bonnett. If there's a man in college that knows, you're the fellow."

Bonnett laughed in turn as he said, "You flatter me. The meeting is next Saturday, isn't it?"

"According to custom it is."

"Who's your man for class president?" Bonnett spoke quietly and much as if the matter was one in which he had no personal or special interest.

"Now out with it, Bonnett!" said Will good-naturedly and stopping abruptly in his walk. "You've got something up your sleeve. What is it?"

Bonnett coughed and laughed lightly, and then said, "That's always your way, Phelps. You'd shave a man with a broad-axe instead of a razor if you had your way."

"I'm flattered some more. No, I don't know that I'd shave a man with an axe, but I wouldn't call it a razor if I did. If you have anything to say, I believe in coming right out and saying it and be done with it."

"Phelps, will you accept the nomination for class president?"

"Do you mean me?" exclaimed Will. "It hadn't entered my head."

"Very likely. If it had, I might not be talking with you now. It's in the heads of a good many fellows in the class though."

"Now look here, Bonnett. You've got this thing all thought out and you know exactly how the land lies. Give it to me straight, old man! As I told you, I'm not much good at beating the bush."

"Ahem!" coughed Bonnett. "Well, I don't mind telling you that the North Hall and West Hall crowds are pretty well united upon you."

Will was aware that the students who roomed in these two buildings, although they did not as a rule belong to any of the college fraternities, still 'pulled together,' as he expressed it, in class elections, and usually against any candidate that chanced to come from any of the Greek letter societies. It was with this thought in his mind and his suspicions aroused that he was silent for a moment.

"Go on with your story, Bonnett," he said at last.

"Want more than that? That's thirty per cent. of the class for you already."

"Go on."

"Well, there are three of the fraternities that will be for you too. That will make it up to forty per cent. of the class."

"Which fraternities?"

"The Betas, the Taus, and the Gammas."

"How about the others?"

"They can't be counted upon, I'm afraid. But if you stand, your own men will of course support you, and that will bring it up almost to the point of carrying it. We can count upon enough stragglers to put the thing through, when we come as near as we shall. And we'll have Foster and Knapp make the speeches for you, and they're about the best speakers we have, you know. I honestly believe the thing is done if you will say the word."

Will was silent and thoughtful for a time. He appreciated fully what the honor would mean. How pleased his father would be too! To be president of the class in his junior year was an honor not to be despised or lightly turned aside.

"Bonnett," he said at last, "let's have the whole thing. What's to follow this? Suppose your scheme works and I'm elected, what then?"

"You'd be class president," laughed Bonnett.

"Yes, but what would be expected of me? I know you well enough to know that you haven't worked up this scheme just to let it stand. There's something beyond it. Something more to follow. Now let's have it straight, as I told you."

CHAPTER V

PROVERBIAL WISDOM

"YOU have the facts. I don't see what more you want," said Bonnett quietly.

"I want the facts which I haven't got," said Will laughingly. "What I want to know is, what is to follow all this?"

"I don't know that there is anything special. Of course, we should——"

"Should what?" demanded Will as his companion hesitated.

"Nothing. Nothing at all."

"Yes, there is something. And I must have it."

"Why, the only thing that would be expected would be that when the election comes next year you'd stand by the friends who have stood by you this year. It isn't worth mentioning though. Everybody that knows you knows that's exactly what you would do."

"Bonnett, who is it you want to have run for class president in senior year? I see that he is the colored gentleman in the woodpile."

"You see too much, Phelps," laughed Bonnett a trifle uneasily as Will thought. "You see more than is there."

"Who's the fellow?" demanded Will.

"Why, I don't know that there is any one in partic-

ular. I've heard Clark's name mentioned. I don't know that there's anything in it though."

"Clark who rooms in North Hall?"

"Yes."

Will was silent for a moment as he walked slowly on by his classmate's side. He knew Clark, of course, for he was a member of his own class; but he had never felt especially drawn to him. He was a huge, ungainly fellow, a hard student but not a clear or brilliant one, a man without many winning qualities in his personality, a matter-of-fact, conceited, wordy man, whose voice was always heard loud and frequent at every class meeting. That he was ambitious Will well knew, but as a man to receive the highest office within the gift of the class—that of president in senior year—that was something at which his soul revolted. And he was convinced that he now saw through the workings of the plan in Bonnett's mind. He had consolidated the vote of the North Hall and West Hall crowds by promising them the support of all who entered into the combination for the election of the officers in the junior year. He was unable to perceive all that Bonnett was planning to do, but as far as his own position was concerned he was convinced that now he saw clearly what the end to be sought was.

It certainly was a temptation too. The office which was promised him—and as Will thought the matter over carefully he felt convinced without any undue conceit that the project would succeed—was one that

appealed to him strongly. It was a place of honor, and he understood fully how pleased his father would be at this token of the confidence and friendship of his classmates. And in a way it was all fair and legitimate.

"I'll think it over, Bonnett," he said quietly.

"Isn't much time for that." And Bonnett laughed uneasily.

"I can tell you to-morrow—perhaps to-morrow morning."

"Better settle it now, Phelps. It's a good thing and on the square. But there'll be a lot of work to be done, and the sooner we get at it the better the scheme will work."

"You couldn't expect me to work for it," said Will quickly.

"Not at all. Not at all," said Bonnett, soothingly. "We knew you couldn't do anything of the kind. Of course, you'd tell your own fraternity men so that they might——"

"Go to work for me?" interrupted Will.

"Not necessarily. Of course, it would be perfectly square if they did, and no one would think of saying a word against it. But we shouldn't ask it. All we'd really want would be for them to know of the plan so that they would be on hand with their votes."

Will laughed slightly as he listened, for he well knew that Bonnett would expect his friends to "take off their coats" for him, though in his words there was only a mere hint at the suggestion.

"Where do you come in, in all this, Bonnett?" he inquired.

"I don't come in at all. I don't expect and don't want any office."

"You'd rather sit back and pull the strings that make the officers jump?"

"I don't think they'd find me a very hard 'boss.'"

"Bonnett, I'll give you my decision to-morrow morning after chapel."

"I'd like to do some work to-night," suggested Bonnett.

"I've got to think this over. I can't tell you now."

"All right," responded the junior cheerfully. He was too shrewd a politician not to yield gracefully to the inevitable. "We'll go back now."

Not a word was spoken concerning the election of the class officers during their walk back to the fraternity house, and when they arrived at the entrance Bonnett, declining Will's invitation to come in, went off whistling as gayly as if he never had thought of projects or combinations.

Will Phelps thoughtfully entered the house and in the library discovered Foster and "Willie" chatting. Both glanced up at his entrance, and Foster said, "Where have you been, Will? I missed you."

"I've been taking a walk with Bonnett," replied Will with a laugh.

"Which means that some scheme is on foot," replied Foster quietly.

"Yes, that's just it. You fellows tell me what you

think of it." And Will at once related the interview he had had with his classmate and told of the proposition which had been placed before him. "What do you say?" he inquired when he had told all.

Neither of his friends spoke for a minute, and then Foster said, "I don't see why you shouldn't do it. You're one of the leaders, and there isn't a more popular fellow in the class. I'd like to have you take it."

"That's the kind of a friend for you!" laughed Will, who despite the lightness of his words was deeply touched by Foster's feeling and interest. It was nothing new in his experience, however, for the love of his room-mate was so well known to him that he often took it as he received the sunlight, with hardly a thought of its meaning. And in his own heart he knew too that Foster was the one fellow to whom his heart went out as to no other one. The years had only strengthened the feeling, and he had really expected that Foster would say what he had just said.

"What do you say, Willie?" he inquired, turning to the graduate. "Your deep learning and wide experience, to say nothing of your 'nerve,' qualify you to give us some sage advice."

"I'm not saying much," replied Wilkins quietly. "I'm listening."

"'Strike while the iron's hot,'" said Foster eagerly. "Here's the chance. Now take it."

"I'm not very much for proverbs," remarked Wilkins.

"There's nothing the matter with that one, is there?"

"Yes. Some iron ought not to be struck at all, no matter whether it's hot or cold."

"Well, then, 'Every dog has his day.' This is Will's day and he would be a fool not to take it."

"'Every dog has his day'; I guess that's so," murmured Wilkins, "but I've seen some dogs that seemed to be in evidence every day. This fellow Bonnett for example. Isn't he in evidence most of the time?"

"His hand may be, but he keeps himself in the shade," laughed Will.

"A bit shady himself, perhaps."

"Quit that!" said Foster sharply. "You ought to be ashamed of yourself. And you an old, bald-headed alumnus too."

"I won't do it again," replied Wilkins meekly. "But I do want to impress upon your youthful minds the absolute foolness of a good many of the proverbs you hear. And sometimes they are given off by men that ought to know better."

"My father told me when I came up to Winthrop," ventured Will, who was ever ready to quote his father, "when he was trying to make me look out for my expenses, that 'a penny saved was a penny earned.' There's nothing the matter with preaching that, is there? I confess I have not practised it," he added somewhat ruefully.

"I have great respect for your pater," said Wilkins

soberly; "but with all due regard for his sage remark I don't believe he's right."

"Why not?"

"Suppose I have a dollar in my pocket——"

"I can't suppose any such thing. It's too big a strain on the imagination," interrupted Will demurely.

"All right. We'll suppose you have a dollar in your pocket. Oh, I'm only supposing," added Wilkins as Will hastily arose and in much eagerness began to search his own pockets. "Yours will do as well as any one's. It's all a make-believe anyway. Now suppose you are tempted to spend five cents on twenty separate and different occasions, and, for the sake of the argument, we'll suppose you yield not to temptation on the twenty aforesaid occasions. How much money will you have in your pocket after all the struggles?"

"It would depend. But I'll say I still have the dollar."

"Any more? Any less?"

"I suppose not."

"Then the proverb is false, isn't it? You have 'saved,' according to the proverb, five cents every time you resisted. And yet your original dollar is still all you have."

"Yes, but I wouldn't have had that if I'd spent it."

"That's begging the question."

"But money isn't good for anything except to use," insisted Will.

"That's begging the question too. I'm not saying I don't approve of the spirit of thrift—in some one else. It's a great thing and should be diligently cultivated by the youthful. But suppose I do save up all my money, what then?"

"Why, you have it."

"Not a bit of it. Along comes a chap with a 'scheme' and he fastens on to my hoard with all his hands and both feet. And he never comes back. I've been saving my pennies for him to swagger on, and I see them vanish as that fellow in Virgil saw his father go out of his sight into hot air."

"Thin air, you mean, Willie," laughed Foster.

"Well, thin air, hot air, smoke—all one and the same thing. I'm a bit rusty on my classics, I'll admit. But it's vanished, anyway, and that was what I was trying to explain for your benefit. Put not your trust in riches," continued Wilkins solemnly.

"No, put your riches in the trusts, is the way I read it the other day," broke in Will. "Or as the distinguished wash-lady who has the sublime honor of looking after my laundering remarked soberly to me the other day, 'Them as has, gets.'"

"Wise woman. She knows more than Splinter. 'A little learning is a dangerous thing.'"

"There you go. You can't open your mouth yourself without letting a proverb roll out, and you know it," retorted Foster.

"Can't I? Well, even if I did, the proverb's wrong. Too much learning is as bad as too little.

When I was a boy, many, many years ago, we lived in peace. We weren't afraid of microbes, disease germs, bacilli, et cætera, and much besides. How is it now? Why, we use sterilized slates, germicides, homicides, patricides, and all other cides. We've increased our learning and added to our sorrow. But we don't know how to spell," added Wilkins in mock solemnity.

"My washlady mends my clothes, and I believe 'a stitch in time saves nine,' don't you?" inquired Will.

"Not a bit of it. My tailor sewed up some garments of mine not long ago, but the place he sewed had then become so much stronger than the other parts that they couldn't stand the strain. Gone all to pieces!" Wilkins added, shaking his head, "and all because that fool tailor thought he'd use that proverb."

"'Twas your conscience," laughed Will. "You were afraid. It wasn't the tailor. 'Conscience doth make cowards of us all.'"

"Don't you believe it, my idiotic young friend! It's the cowardly, skulking, villainous rascal who hasn't any conscience at all that I'm afraid of."

"You're great, Willie! Immense!" retorted Will. "'Lives of great men all remind us,'" he murmured.

"Another fool proverb."

"That isn't a proverb. It's a poem. You must have heard it. It's Longfellow's——"

"Ever hear of T. Carlyle?" demanded Wilkins.

"Yes."

"Was he a great man?"

"Yes."

"Ever hear how he used to 'pass the bacon and oatmeal' to his wife? Ever hear how he used to fire things across the dinner table at his spouse? Ever hear him growl and snarl and whine? Oh, yes. He was a great man. He wrote some sublime words. But pray excuse me! I don't want to make my life sublime."

"You can't help it, Willie. You're born that way."

"What's all that got to do with Will being class president, I'd like to know?" said Foster impatiently.

"Ah, yes. We'll discuss that matter at once." And Wilkins quickly sat erect in his chair.

CHAPTER VI

A DISAPPEARANCE AT THE PRESIDENT'S HOUSE

"WHAT do you say, Willie?" inquired Will Phelps quickly.

"I say drop it," replied Wilkins without raising his voice.

"You don't mean what you say, Willie!" spoke up Foster excitedly. "This is Will's chance!"

"It won't be his only one. My opinion is that Bonnett is trying to shelve him."

"Shelve me? What do you mean?" said Will.

"Just what I say. He's trying to put you on the shelf. If he can get you elected class president this year, he shuts you out for next year, and in my humble judgment that's just what he's aiming at. He or one of his men will come in somewhere on the deal for next year. You mark my words!"

"But I'm not sure of next year," suggested Will, who was deeply moved by Wilkins' words. "'A bird in the hand,' you know."

"No, I don't know. I told you my opinion of proverbs, anyway, and as far as 'a bird in the hand being worth two in the bush' is concerned, it depends altogether on the bird. I would not give up two live hens cackling in the bushes over two fresh-laid eggs for a dead crow. Would you?"

"No, I wouldn't," laughed Will. "But that isn't the way I understand it. That isn't what it means."

"It's what this means," responded Wilkins positively. "Don't you touch it, Will."

"I may not have a chance to," replied Will lightly.

"Look here, Wilkins," suggested Foster, "I may be all wrong and you may have all the concentrated wisdom of the world; but I confess it doesn't look that way to me. It seems to me this is Will's chance. I'd like to see him president next year just as much as you would, but it does seem to me he's letting something of an uncertainty come in to take the place of a sure thing. He might be elected next year, but he's sure of it this year; that is, as sure as any one can be of something he hasn't quite got."

"If he drops this he'll be all the more sure of that," said Wilkins firmly. "It won't hurt him any when it's reported he wouldn't go into a 'deal.' I hate these 'kid' deals, anyway. They ought to be ripped out of college."

"Anybody can tell what ought to be done, but it's a wise one who can tell us how to do it," laughed Foster. "I guess everybody would like to see them go, but they're here and they won't go, and the best one can do is to do our best with things as they are. I don't want to have Will waste his fragrance on a desert air like the rose that was born to blush unseen, you know."

"Now look here, you kid!" said Wilkins sharply, sitting quickly erect in the sudden excitement that

possessed him. "The first thing I know you'll be going in to tell me about the 'mute, inglorious Miltons.' Don't you believe a word of it. I don't believe there ever was a genuine Milton who was mute or inglorious either. At least, he never showed up within twenty-seven thousand miles of Winthrop College! I know a good many fellows who thought they were Miltons, or whose mammas told the faculty they were. But you and I know better. The trouble with them was that they weren't Miltons, and as for being mute—bah! You could hear their bray from one end of the land to the other. What's that got to do with Will Phelps, anyway? He's not posing as a Milton, is he? If he was, I'd smother him. I know how it's the proper thing for a man to say he's read 'Paradise Lost' and 'Paradise Regained,' but tell me one man—yes, I mean it—one man that ever did it, will you? I mean one really live, common-sense man."

"I fawncy that Splinter has read them," drawled Will.

"He may, but I question it even with him, unless they were first translated into Greek. Now, Will," he added seriously, "I've said my say and I'm done. I didn't offer my advice, as you know. You asked me for it and I gave it. You can take it or drop it, just as you please, for after all, you're the fellow that has to decide the matter."

"Worse luck for me."

"No, it isn't. You've nothing to regret in the

matter. I'm not posing, but I don't think I'll ever forget the words of Doctor James when he preached in the college chapel one Sunday two or three years ago."

"Your memory is as good as your nerve."

"Never you mind that!" retorted Wilkins. "I was telling you what the doctor said, or rather I was about to tell you when you broke in upon me. He said 'the good was ever the enemy of the best.'"

"That wasn't original with him," said Foster. "I've heard it before."

"I didn't say it was original with him, did I? All I said was that he said it. It stuck in my mind. Now, having given you my sage counsel, I'm going to bed. Good night!" And Wilkins at once arose and went to his room.

For an hour Will Phelps and his room-mate remained and talked over every phase of the subject. No decision had been made, however, when at last they also retired to their rooms and the silence of the night rested over the sleeping college town.

On the following morning when the students filed out from the chapel, Will Phelps found Bonnett waiting for him near one of the great trees by the pathway near the entrance to the building itself.

"Well, Phelps?" inquired Bonnett.

"I can't see my way to do it, Bonnett," responded Will slowly.

"You're making a mistake—the mistake of your life."

"I've made so many of those already I'm almost getting used to them."

"There are plenty of fellows who would jump at the chance."

"Let them jump," laughed Will good-naturedly.

"You've thought it all over?"

"Yes."

"Talked with your crowd?"

"Some of them."

"And they advised you not to?"

"Some did and some didn't. The counsels were so divided I was right where I was at the beginning. It was good of you to think of me, Bonnett," added Will warmly. "But honestly I can't see my way to do it."

"I'm sorry and I'm afraid you'll be sorrier," replied Bonnett sharply as he turned on his heel and departed from the place.

Will gazed after him a moment in silence, half tempted to recall his words and take back his decision. It was evident that Bonnett was disappointed and angry, and Will was aware that his classmate's influence in the college was not slight. A second thought, however, strengthened him in his decision, and he resolutely turned away and soon overtook Foster, with whom he entered the room where already many of his class had assembled.

"What did you tell him, Will?" inquired Foster as they took their seats.

"I told him I wouldn't do it," responded Will,

glancing for a moment across the room where Bonnett was seated. That Bonnett was pretending to ignore him and evidently was angry, only caused him to smile derisively as he took his seat.

"It's all right, Will, I'm glad you told him that," said Foster.

"You are? Why, I thought you wanted me to say 'yes.'"

"I did, but I don't now. I've slept over it and I'm wiser."

Will smiled and as the professor called the class to order he became silent and the subject was not again referred to by either of them before the class meeting, for the election of officers was to be held on the coming Saturday.

On the evening of the day in which the conversation occurred, which has been reported in this chapter, the president of the college, with his wife, gave a reception to the incoming students. Only the two lower classes, as classes, were invited; but both Will and Foster, together with several other juniors and seniors, had been personally invited by the president's wife to be present and assist in making the entering class feel somewhat more at home in the midst of their new and unfamiliar surroundings. Already one "rush" had taken place between the two lower classes and Will, who thought lightly, perhaps too lightly, of such matters, had interestedly watched the struggle for the possession of the precious sweater, which at last had been retained successfully by the freshmen.

He had marked young Mott as one of the most vigorous of the contestants and smiled as he perceived that his first estimate of him had perhaps not been altogether correct.

On the evening of the reception Mott was one of the busiest of the freshmen. The demure expression did not depart from his face, but he was so evidently bent upon entering into the spirit of the occasion that Will watched him with increasing interest.

"This is a great spread, Mr. Phelps," said Mott as he stopped for a moment in the midst of the throng to speak to Will.

"You seem to be enjoying yourself," responded Will pleasantly.

"It's great! But it isn't half so great as—well, you just wait, Mr. Phelps, till it's over and you'll know what I mean." And young Mott vanished in the throng before Will was able to inquire what he meant. The freshman's prophecy was forgotten and an hour had passed when Will felt a touch upon his arm that caused him quickly to turn. It was the wife of the president who had touched his arm, and as he looked into her face Will perceived that she was in trouble of some kind.

"I don't know what we shall do, Mr. Phelps," she was saying. "Our ice cream has been stolen." Her lips were trembling, though Will thought he detected a smile lurking in the corners of her mouth.

"I'm very sorry. Probably some of the freshmen have done it. Is there anything I can do?"

"Not unless you can bring back the cream. It's too late to order more."

"Never mind," said Will soothingly. "The boys will all understand, and if it's known who did it, why——"

"Oh, I know or at least I suppose it was done only in the spirit of mischief."

"Spirit of nothing!" replied Will warmly. He had been a frequent visitor at the home of the president and naturally was indignant at what had occurred. "Don't you trouble yourself about it! I'll go out and look, but if I don't find any trace of the cream—and I hardly think I shall," he added with a smile—"why, I'll see that it is all explained among the fellows. Every one of them will understand. They appreciate your kind heart, I assure you."

"Thank you, Mr. Phelps. I didn't know just what to do. I haven't told my husband. I thought I would tell you and you might be able to help me out before any one learned of my trouble." The good woman smiled in spite of her perplexity and disappointment, and Will at once departed from the room.

A careful search failed, however, to reveal the presence of the missing cream, and when a half-hour had gone he returned and quietly spread among the assembly the report of the loss which had taken place.

There was some laughter and more indignation when it was understood by the students, and many were the expressions of sympathy given their hostess. The matter was looked upon in the light of a foolish

prank on the part of some silly freshmen, and when the assembly dispersed it had vanished from the thoughts of most of the visitors.

It was not so with Will Phelps, however, for as he stepped forth from the president's house the "prophecy" of Mott, the freshman, suddenly recurred to him, and quickly excusing himself to Foster he started swiftly toward North Hall, where the freshman in question had his room. As he walked on, his feeling of indignation became stronger and when at last he knocked on the door of Mott's room he was in a frame of mind that boded little good for his freshman *protégé*.

In response to his summons he was bidden enter, and his surprise was manifest in the blank expression of his face when he beheld Mott and his room-mate bending over their study tables, each apparently intent in his task.

"Good evening, Mr. Phelps!" exclaimed Mott as he perceived who his visitor was, and at once placing a chair before Will. "Take a seat. This is good of you. I didn't look for a visit so soon."

Will took the proffered seat, keenly eying the young freshman as he did so, but was unable to discover any trace of guilt in the demure face.

"Shame about the cream up at the president's house, wasn't it, Mr. Phelps?" inquired Mott.

"Yes. It was worse than that! It was an insult, an insult to the president and his wife and all the college! If the fools who took the cream could have

seen her face when she told me about it I think they'd have felt like crawling. The college won't stand for any such thing as that."

"I shouldn't think it would, Mr. Phelps," replied Mott soberly. "I wouldn't be in the shoes of the fellows that did it. Do you know who they were?"

"I have had my suspicions."

"So have I."

"Who was it?"

"I couldn't tell you that. A fellow can't go back on——" Mott stopped abruptly as there came a knock on his door. He glanced at his room-mate uneasily, but did not invite those who were outside the door to enter.

Evidently the visitors were becoming impatient, for there was a sound as of rattling dishes and some one called, "Open up, Mott, if you want your share of Prexy's ice cream. There won't be a grease spot of it left if you don't get a move on you!"

CHAPTER VII

IN THE FRESHMAN'S ROOM

WITHOUT waiting for a response to the summons, the door was opened from the outside, and Will could see three students, whom he took to be freshmen, standing before him, two of them holding plates of ice cream in their hands, while the third was empty-handed.

"Here you are, Mott!" called one of them. "You don't appear to be very——" began one of them. Suddenly he stopped as he perceived Will Phelps in the room, and the eager expression of his face gave place to one of consternation as he recognized the junior.

"Come in here! Come right along, you freshmen!" said Will sternly, at once stepping forward and closing the door quickly so that all were shut in the room.

"Now what have you to say for yourselves?" he demanded sternly.

No one responded and the abashed freshmen glanced foolishly at one another, that is, all except Mott, whose expression was almost one of reproach as he gazed at his astounded classmates.

"I thought you were the ones," resumed Will sternly. "Of all the low-down tricks this as about the worst! It hasn't even the excuse of foolness! To

go to work and spoil the reception and hurt the feelings, as you did, of that good woman who was just doing all in her power to try to make your class feel a bit at home here! You're worse than the man that robs a baby of its candy! You beat the record, you do, and I'll tell you right now that you have queered yourselves with the whole college."

"Don't be too hard with them, Mr. Phelps!" pleaded Mott. "I don't think they meant to do anything very bad."

"If they didn't know, they were fools; and if they did know, they were knaves, or at least they haven't the first instincts of a gentleman!"

Will at first had been somewhat abashed by the calm assurance of Mott, of whose share in the theft he had had no question, but the manner of the young freshman was puzzling and for a moment he was at a loss what to say, when his indignation broke forth in the words he had hotly hurled at the group.

"We didn't mean any harm," stammered one.

"I know they didn't, Mr. Phelps," began Mott quickly. "Not even when they came in here to treat me. They probably had heard it was the proper thing to do and didn't think of anything else. Didn't you do some foolish things when you were a freshman?"

"I didn't do any such low-down tricks as this!" responded Will warmly, though the tones of his voice changed in spite of his anger, as for a moment his thoughts ran back to some of his own experiences in freshman year.

"Of course you didn't," said Mott eagerly, "but you can understand how these fellows made the mistake. For it was a mistake," he added gravely. "Now what do you want them to do, Mr. Phelps? It's too late to take the stuff back to Prexy's house, or they would do that."

"They can at least apologize," said Will warmly.

"Of course they can! And they will too, if you say the word. That wouldn't bring back the reception, of course, but it might make her feel better. We don't want to queer the whole class the first thing."

"It's the thing to do, though."

"Yes, I suppose it is. You know best. She would probably tell the president and he'd have these fellows up before the faculty. And they'd be sent home in disgrace. It would make a heap of trouble in their homes to have all this happen right at the start, but they deserve it, and I say let them go it!"

"They ought to have thought of that before," said Will. He was speaking quietly now, for Mott's words had made him think of a certain home in Sterling and what would be the feeling there if he himself had been sent home for such a foolish, thoughtless piece of work as that in which some of the present freshman class had engaged.

"That's so," said Mott. "Every word of it is true, but it's just as true that they didn't too. They're only freshmen, Mr. Phelps, and don't know any better. If they had known more, they wouldn't be freshmen, don't you see?"

Will laughed and prepared to depart. "I'll think it over and tell you later," he said. "It's too late now to take back the cream anyway. But it was a mean trick all the same."

"It certainly was," assented Mott. "And it won't happen again, will it, fellows?" he inquired, turning to his classmates as he spoke.

"Not if we know ourselves," assented one of them eagerly.

As the possibility of a recurrence of the "joke" was certainly not threatening, inasmuch as the reception was an annual affair and there would be no opportunity to repeat it while the men before him were freshmen, Will laughed slightly as he reached for his hat and once more prepared to depart.

"Don't go, Mr. Phelps," said Mott quickly. "These fellows are not going to stay and I'd like very much to see you about something important."

"All right," responded Will lightly. And yet somehow he felt as if Mott was the most elusive young freshman he had chanced to meet. To all appearances he had had nothing to do with the escapade at the president's house, and yet Will was by no means positive that young Mott had been without a share, or at least without knowledge of what was being done. And then the manner in which he had contrived to assuage a measure of Will's indignation and at the same time make a plea for his guilty classmates that had proved effectual was by no means satisfactory to the junior, though he found himself acquiescing in the result.

"Well, what is it, Mott?" he inquired when the freshmen were gone and he had seated himself in the easy chair which Mott moved toward him.

"I want to ask you a question, Mr. Phelps."

"Ask it."

"Don't you think my brother made a mistake in having me room here?"

"Why?"

"Oh, the fellows are all right enough here, but they're not exactly my kind."

"What is your kind?"

"You know what I mean. You didn't room here in your freshman year, now did you, Mr. Phelps?"

"No, I didn't room here. But there are special reasons, as I understand it, why your brother thought it would be best for you."

"Oh, yes. He wants me to profit by his mistakes. If I have to profit in that way I think I'd rather take it from my own mistakes than from his." Mott was speaking in his most demure manner and Will Phelps laughed in spite of his desire to appear serious.

"You'll probably make enough to teach you a few lessons, as it is," he said with a twinkle in his eyes.

"I haven't any doubt about that," responded Mott. "But I don't want to add a lot of electives, you see. The course is hard enough and long enough anyway. Now, Mr. Phelps, just think of what these fellows did to-night. I don't want to get mixed up in any such fool tricks and you don't want me to, either. Now, do you, Mr. Phelps?"

"Of course I don't. But you don't have to. It isn't where a fellow rooms that decides that, you must understand."

"I do understand. But I'm like poor dog Tray. A fellow is known by the company he keeps. I'm not afraid of the company I'll keep," he added hastily as he saw that Will was about to speak. "It's the company that'll keep me I'm afraid of. I wish I was out of this, and if you should write my brother I think he'd listen to you, for he thinks you are all to the good."

"I'll think it over."

"That's good of you, Mr. Phelps. I knew you'd do it!"

"I didn't say I'd do it. I said I'd think about it."

"That's the same thing," said Mott eagerly. "Oh, there's another thing I wanted to ask you about, Mr. Phelps," he added.

"What is it?"

"You've tramped all over these hills, haven't you? I think my brother used to tell me about lots of walks he'd taken with you."

Will smiled as he recalled the one eventful walk he had taken with the elder Mott,[1] and said, "Yes, I've been over most of the region."

"Which is the best tramp for a fellow to take first?"

"Any one. He'll take them all before he's through college."

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[1] See "Winning His 'W.'"

"There's one walk I hear it isn't safe to take," suggested Mott.

"'Isn't safe'? I never heard of any that weren't safe. Which one?"

"The one over East Mountain."

"I've been over it a half-dozen times. I never found any trouble."

"Why, didn't you hear what took place there this very summer?"

"What do you mean? I didn't hear anything."

"Why, one day last August two men started out from the hotel to take a walk over East Mountain. Lots of people saw them start and a good many met them on the path up the mountain."

"Well, that's not so very dangerous, is it?" laughed Will.

"Yes, but wait, Mr. Phelps. In spite of what I said about people seeing and meeting these two men, no one ever saw them come back. Several men saw them go up and up and up, but not a trace of them could be found after they suddenly had disappeared right near the summit."

"I never heard of it," said Will, who was deeply interested now. "You say they were seen going up the side of the mountain?"

"Yes, sir. They were seen all the way up and then they just disappeared."

"And they never came back?"

"Never."

"Why, I think there must be some mistake about

it, Mott. I haven't heard a word about it. I think I should, if such a serious thing had really happened."

"But it did happen, Mr. Phelps! I know it did!" said Mott eagerly.

"You say they never came back?"

"Yes, sir, that's just what I said."

"Weren't any searching parties sent out?"

"I don't know, but I don't think there were."

"There must have been! And you say that they were never heard of afterwards?"

"Not quite. No, I didn't say that. I said they were seen all the way up and then they just disappeared from sight."

"Strange I never heard about it. I never knew any one to be lost on East Mountain."

"They weren't lost," said Mott solemnly.

"Did they find them?" inquired Will eagerly.

"Oh, yes. The two men went up and up and up this side of the mountain. And then they—went down the other side to Chelsea and there they took the train and started for New York."

Not a muscle in Mott's expressionless face had moved, and Will had been led absolutely without suspicion into the trap. There was a silence in the room for a moment and then Will rose from his seat, and with a light laugh said:

"You'll do, freshman! You don't need to come to me for any advice."

"Oh, but I want to, Mr. Phelps!"

"You don't need any help I can give you."

"Yes, I do. You'll write my brother, won't you, Mr. Phelps?"

"Not to-night."

"To-morrow, then?"

"That's too far away. I might be lost on East Mountain before that time comes. I don't dare trust myself after your story."

Will Phelps departed from North Hall, puzzled concerning young Mott. He was interested far more than he had expected to be in the demure freshman who was evidently destined to be a leading spirit in college affairs. There was something exceedingly attractive in the personality of the lad, and despite his recollection of the elder brother, who had been expelled from college and for whom Will had never felt a strong liking, he nevertheless was strongly drawn in many ways to this younger brother.

He had walked on thinking over the interview and laughing quietly as he recalled how the freshman had made him appear almost ridiculous by his tale of the "adventure" on East Mountain when he suddenly was aware that he had left his cane in Mott's room.

Instantly turning about, he ran swiftly back to Mott's room and without the ceremony of rapping opened the door. On the table in the center of the room was a large dish of ice cream, and standing upon the table was Mott, a long iron spoon in his hands with which he was serving the tempting treat to the four freshmen who were seated in the room.

"Have some cream, Mr. Phelps?" called Mott from his place on the table."

Page 79.

CHAPTER VIII

THE CLASS MEETING

"HAVE some cream, Mr. Phelps?" called Mott glibly from his place on the table.

Angry as Will was at the sight before him he nevertheless was compelled to laugh at the frightened aspect of Mott's companions at the entrance of the junior, though Mott himself did not, as far as appearances went, appear to be in the least disconcerted by the unexpected return of his recent visitor.

For a moment Will glared at the little assembly and then without a word took the cane for which he had come and left the building. He was still more puzzled to know what was best for him to do as he walked on toward his rooms, and the question had not been decided when he entered the house and joined Foster and Wilkins, who were seated in the library.

In a few words he related what had occurred, though he did not refer to young Mott by name, and then inquired of his friends what in their judgment was best to be done.

"You're taking too much on yourself, Will," said Wilkins soberly. "The discipline of the college and the reformation of all the young freshman reprobates in the college isn't what your father sent you here for, is it?"

"Perhaps not," replied Will, "but when a fellow has seen how cut up they were at Prexy's house over the rascally trick, and when he knows just who the fool freshmen were that made all the trouble, why he doesn't feel just as if he ought not to do anything."

"Work on the freshmen, Will. Don't get mixed up with the faculty. It's their business and not yours to deal with the affair itself."

"Oh, I know that," laughed Will. "I'm not posing as the faculty detective. You can rest easy about that! But what I'm troubled about is this freshman Mott. He's about the coolest hand for a freshman I've ever run across yet." And then he told how Mott had drawn him on into the story of the "strange disappearance" of the two men who had climbed East Mountain in the preceding August.

Both his companions laughed heartily over the story, and Foster said, "My advice to you, Will, is to drop the fellow. You'll get your fingers burned before you're done with him. He's a Mott, that's all clear enough, and 'blood tells,' you know."

Will did not reply, and the conversation changed to other topics, though Will himself did not cease to think of the young freshman, who somehow in spite of his tricks appealed to him strongly.

"What did you tell Bonnett Will?" inquired Wilkins.

"I told him I wouldn't do it."

"That's right!" said Wilkins warmly. "Have as little to do with him as you can."

"He has a lot of influence in college," suggested Will. "He's a leader, and then too, he's halfback on the football team this year, you know."

"That may be, but he's a 'way back' in his standing," suggested Wilkins.

"I don't think that always counts," laughed Foster. "What I've got against him is that he plays on the team under an assumed name."

"Not exactly," suggested Will, who, though he had no special liking for Bonnett, with the perversity of human nature was quick to defend the man who had been friendly to him and who was not present to defend himself. "That isn't quite it, you know, Foster," he added.

"Why not? His name is Bonnett, but if you'll look in the papers for the account of the first game we play you won't find Bonnett but Hodges given in the list of our players."

"Well, his middle name is Hodges, isn't it? Robert Hodges Bonnett."

"That is beating the devil around the bush and you know it."

"It isn't the proper thing, I'll acknowledge," said Will.

"What does he do it for?" inquired Wilkins.

"Why, it's this way, as I understand it. He has an aunt who is very fond of him and she is said to have money. She hates football as much as she likes Bonnett, so she has told him—at least that's the way I've heard it—that if he wouldn't play the game while he's

in college she'd leave him a couple of hundred thousand in her will. In fact, it's reported she's made her will already."

"How old is she?" said Wilkins soberly.

"I don't know. I've never seen the lady in question, but she's old enough to know better, anyway. It isn't fair to either one of them."

"That may be so, but it doesn't help Bonnett any," retorted Foster warmly.

"Even so, milord; she's put a temptation before him too strong to bear."

"The fellow's a sneak! Don't you trust him a minute! Don't you have anything to do with him!" said Wilkins quietly.

"Probably I sha'n't—after this," laughed Will. "He'll run if he sees me coming."

"Well, you fellows must be good to yourselves," said Wilkins, rising from his chair. "I have to leave at six-thirty to-morrow morning, so I'll not expect to see you till I come up to Winthrop some time this winter."

"Come up as often as you can, Willie," said Will cordially. "You know we'll always be glad to see you. Your advice—and nerve—do more for us sometimes than you can imagine."

"Thank you, kind sir. I should like to spend more time among these purple hills, but duty calls and I must obey. I've got to go back and get ready to relieve suffering humanity—and incidentally make all kinds of dollars."

"There's one kind you'll never get," laughed Will.

"What's that?"

"Dishonest ones."

"Not if the court knows itself," responded Wilkins. "There's one thing I decided a long time ago and that was that I'd never charge for anything I ever did for a man—unless he could pay it."

Will laughed, for the huge "Willie" was speaking with apparent seriousness. "I am glad I'm to be a doctor, not a lawyer. I'll have a chance to be more honest, you see. Why, I read the other day of a fellow who'd robbed a bank of twenty thousand dollars, and when he was hauled up he went to a lawyer for counsel. The humble lawyer asked him two questions—one if the fellow had really taken the money, and the chap owned up he had. Then the lawyer asked him how much of it he had left, and the poor fellow declared he had just ten dollars remaining. The lawyer then told him he would better plead guilty and throw himself on the mercy of the court. The poor chap snivelled that he would, and then, to show that he wasn't all bad, he asked the lawyer how much he should pay him for his advice. Now what do you suppose that rascally lawyer charged him?"

"Ten dollars," replied Will promptly.

"That's just what he did," answered Wilkins.

"That's your story, Wilkins," retorted Will, who was hoping to follow in his own father's footsteps and become a lawyer himself. "I heard one on the doctors the other day too, and you've got to hear it. There

was a poor fellow taken sick on the street and a hurry call was sent to the hospital for an ambulance. When they got him on a bed in the hospital two young doctors worked over him for a spell, and then when they'd about decided what the trouble was, one of them turned to the patient and said to him, 'How much money have you got?' 'Two hundred dollars,' gasped the poor chap. 'That settles it,' said the doctor to the other physician. 'This is a very bad attack of appendicitis and this poor fellow will have to be operated upon at once.' 'I agree with you perfectly,' said the other doctor. 'If he hadn't had but five dollars it would have been an attack of acute indigestion, but as he has a couple of hundred, it's appendicitis beyond the shadow of a doubt.'"

"The wonder is that they didn't charge him two hundred dollars for their advice and let the fellow go," said Foster.

"Gentlemen, you are both wrong. You must not believe everything you hear. Even if that story was true you must not forget that there is a professional side to it. A doctor has a duty to his fellow-physicians as well as to——"

"Yes, 'honor among thieves,'" interrupted Will with a laugh.

"Seriously, boys, and no joking, I have made up my mind that there is one thing that's absolutely necessary before a fellow can be very much of a doctor or a lawyer either, for the matter of that."

"What do you mean, Willie?" inquired Will.

"I mean he's got to be—a man. Nothing can come into the place of that."

There was no question as to Wilkins' sincerity, and his companions were the more impressed because both knew the sterling integrity of their friend from which he had never swerved in his college days. Not a man in his class had possessed more influence, though Wilkins' voice was seldom heard. He was a fair student, the friend of many, though never effusive; and it was the absolute feeling of confidence that was felt toward him that had counted most in the influence he possessed. And his visit at Winthrop at the beginning of the college year had really done more to confirm Will Phelps in his line of conduct than even Will himself was aware.

After the departure of Wilkins, the opening work demanded so much of Will's time that he had no opportunity to seek out his freshman *protégé,* or even to think of the matter of the election of the class officers. The date for the meeting called for the latter purpose, however, soon arrived, and with scarcely a thought of the choice in his mind of the men he personally desired to see elected, Will joined Foster on his way to the building in which the class was to assemble.

The meeting was called to order by the outgoing president, who, after he had expressed his own gratitude for the honor which had been shown him, declared that nominations for the new presiding officer were then "in order." There was a brief moment of

silence, and then Clark arose and in most impressive tones began to speak.

"Mr. President," he said solemnly, "it is being reported on all sides, it is heard among the alumni, it is the sole topic of conversation amongst the friends of our beloved college, it is a subject upon which the press has expressed its opinions again and again, it is a matter of interest in every land upon which the sun in his beauty shines with his piercing light——"

"Well, what is it, Clark?" broke in one of the members of the class, whereat there was a laugh that the presiding officer quickly checked.

In nowise disconcerted Clark resumed—"I say, Mr. President, that it is a matter of supreme and superabounding importance to all who have the sublimest interest of our beloved college at heart, that the reports that are spread broadcast throughout the whole world that Winthrop is becoming a rich man's college should ineradically and irrevocably be checked. How can this be done? Let me reply, by the election to this high office of a man who is worthy in his own right of character and inherited genius——"

"Who is it, Clark?" "Name your man!" "Make your nomination, old boy!" These and similar demands interrupted the junior, who was apparently being carried away by the floods of his own eloquence.

For the first time somewhat disturbed by the manifest impatience of the class, Clark said hurriedly, "Mr. President, I nominate Mr. Thorn."

Thorn was a North Hall man, quiet, unobtrusive

and respected for the sterling qualities he had manifested in working his own way thus far through college.

The nomination was seconded, but was immediately followed by the presentation of the name of Wood, who was a not unworthy representative of the wealthier element in the class. Wood's nomination was followed by that of Carroll, and this in turn by three others, so that when the nominations were closed, six names were before the class and it was evident that there was to be a sharp contest.

"Bonnett's quit," whispered Foster to his roommate.

"Has he?" whispered Will in reply, glancing at the junior in question as he spoke. To all appearances Bonnett was the least interested member of the class. He was leaning back in his seat, with his hands clasped behind his head, and looking up at the ceiling as if he was bored by the entire proceeding. The tellers were busy collecting the ballots, and even when they were prepared to report, Bonnett did not change from his attitude of indifference. The vote of the class had been scattered so widely that no one candidate had received the number of ballots requisite to an election, for one of the by-laws had required that a successful election should be possible only when some one had received more than half the votes of the entire class.

A second ballot resulted in no material change, and even when two of the candidates withdrew their

names, the votes were still so scattered that no class president had been elected.

Bonnett throughout the proceedings had maintained his air of indifference, but after the fourth unsuccessful attempt had been made, he suddenly rose to his feet and when he began to speak the eyes of every junior in the room were at once turned toward him.

CHAPTER IX

AN ELECTION

BONNETT, apparently unaware of the interest which his actions had aroused, began to speak.

"Mr. President," he said, "we have had before us the names of some of the best men in our class. There is not one that has been presented which would not reflect honor upon us and obtain the enthusiastic support of every man, if it so chanced that we could unite upon any one of them. Unfortunately this is just what we are unable to do, though the fact does not in any way reflect upon the popularity or the respect felt for any one or every one of the men whom we have been considering."

Bonnett, who understood perfectly the nature of his classmates, here paused, and if he noted the tokens of approval that greeted his words on every side, apparently he gave them no heed. In a brief time he resumed his speech and said, "Now, Mr. President, there are two things that are desired, I am sure, by every member of this class. One is that not a trace of bitterness should remain among us after this election has taken place, and the other is that we should still have a man for president who will in the eyes of the college worthily represent us. Personally I should be satisfied with the election of any one of the men who

have been nominated, but the good of this class and the welfare of the college demand that every one of us should be willing to lay aside his own personal feelings in this matter. Mr. President, if it is possible, I should like to present a solution of this delicate and difficult problem, but in order to do so it will be necessary that the nominations be reopened. Can this be done?"

In response to Bonnett's words the action was hastily taken, the junior not relinquishing his place upon the floor while the vote was being taken. Foster glanced at his room-mate and smiled, but Will's face was expressionless and he did not respond to his friend's meaning glance.

"Mr. President," began Bonnett again when the time for him to speak once more had come, "I trust I am duly grateful to you and to the class for this courteous consideration. It comes, I know, not because I chanced to be the one to make the request or suggestion, but because every one of us has the same purpose and desire in mind. Now, Mr. President, having said this, and having spoken what I know every one here will acknowledge to be the simple truth when I said not a man would in his heart object to the election of any man whose name has been before us, I want to say a word more. The man to be president of our class in junior year must be one that the whole college looks up to. We are no longer freshmen and don't choose our officers without knowing something of what they are. He must be a man of stand-

ing, a fellow who has dignity, ability, and he must be a gentleman. There is not one of you who will not agree with me that the man whose name I am about to present to you has all these qualities, and, in addition, has a personal popularity in college that is second to that of no student in Winthrop."

Again Bonnett paused, perhaps to observe what the effect of his words had been and perhaps to create just the condition he desired when he should proceed to the climax of his speech. Every face was turned toward him and the silence in the room was intense.

"Mr. President," resumed Bonnett, dropping his voice slightly and speaking very slowly, "the man whose name I present for this high office"—again there was a slight and significant pause on the speaker's part—"is Phelps!"

Instantly a shout went up from the assembly that clearly showed that Bonnett had not spoken without a careful understanding of his audience. Will's face flushed and his eyes almost seemed to shoot fire as he turned for a moment to Foster, who was shouting as loudly as the loudest.

Before the uproar ceased Clark had arisen and in his most ponderous tones seconded the nomination, whereat the applause was renewed.

"Mr. President," shouted Thorn, who had been Clark's candidate—and when it was seen who the speaker was the turmoil quickly subsided, while all turned, eager to hear what the unsuccessful candidate had to say—"Mr. President," repeated Thorn, "this

nomination is so evidently the expression of the true feeling of the class that I move that we dispense with our usual form of balloting and that the secretary of our class be instructed to cast a ballot for Phelps as class president for junior year."

"Second the motion!" "Second the motion!" came from every side of the room.

"Mr. President!" The storm again subsided as it was seen that Will Phelps had risen and was addressing the chairman. "I trust that you and all the fellows in the class will not misunderstand me when I say that I don't want this office. I told——" Will stopped abruptly as he felt Foster kick his foot—"I mean that I said to the one member of the class who spoke to me several days ago, trying to make me believe that the feeling he was good enough to have in his heart for me was the general feeling of the class——"

"Question! Question!" broke in some of the laughing boys.

"The question is called for," responded the presiding officer. "We all appreciate the feeling of Mr. Phelps and can assure him that if he had sought the office he would not be the man we want. As many of you as favor the motion which has been made, that the secretary of the class cast the ballot for Phelps as president, say, 'Aye.'"

A shout went up from the assembly in response to the demand.

"As many as oppose the motion will say, 'No.'"

A silence rested over the room for a moment and then shouts and calls of "Phelps! Phelps!" broke forth on every side.

"The motion is carried unanimously," said the retiring president, and a moment later, when the secretary had gone through the formality of casting a ballot for William Phelps, the presiding officer continued —"Mr. Phelps is elected president of our class for junior year. Mr. Phelps, will you come forward and take the chair?"

Will still hesitated, for in spite of the pleasure which naturally he felt in his enthusiastic election, there was also a feeling of anger as well in his heart. He glanced toward Bonnett, but his classmate was apparently unaware of his existence, for he had resumed his former position and was looking up toward the ceiling, with his hands still clasped behind his head. Before Will could speak or protest, Foster had given him a gentle push that sent him forward, and as the applause was renewed, Will with flushed face and his eyes shining advanced and took his position.

"Speech! Speech!" demanded the noisy assembly.

Will smiled, and as he gazed down at the eager faces before him his anger departed. The joy of an unexpected success was his and he said, "If I did not appreciate the good-will of the class to-day, I know I should not be fit to be your presiding officer. Not that even with it I consider myself fitted for this place of honor. And yet, fellows, I do appreciate your confi-

dence in me, and I'll do my best not to make you ashamed of your president. I want the class to keep right on in the direction in which it has been going, and I'll promise you to do everything in my power to push the good work on. I know you'll do your part. I thank you from the bottom of my heart for the honor you have bestowed upon me."

The speech was greeted with cheers, and the class and college " yells " were given with a will, and then the further business of the meeting was transacted. This was speedily and easily accomplished, and when the meeting was adjourned a host of his classmates assembled about Will expressing their pleasure at his election and congratulating him with the heartiness that is never found outside young life.

The words of praise were sweet to Will's heart and his former feeling of anger was entirely gone. He noticed that Bonnett had not come near him since the election, but had at once quietly departed from the room as soon as the meeting had been adjourned. He smiled as he thought he understood the reason for the apparent lack of interest, and when at last he and Foster were together walking slowly back toward their room, he said, " Foster, Bonnett is a slick article, isn't he? "

" He's a good speaker."

" I don't mean that. But don't you see what he did to-night? "

" I saw that he nominated you in a mighty good speech and that you ought to feel thankful to him."

"I'm not," laughed Will. "Oh, I don't mean to put on any airs," he hastily added. "Of course I'm not such a fool as not to appreciate my election. It's not that. But don't you see what Bonnett was up to all the time?"

"I don't see. I'm thick, perhaps, but it seems to me he did just the right thing and at just the right time and in just the right way."

"Yes, he's succeeded in shutting me out from any chance of being elected president in senior year. Oh, I know I'm not modest," he added laughingly. "I acknowledge I may be taking too much on myself, but it does seem to me that what Bonnett was after was to shut me out next year a good deal more than to have me elected this year, though he had to do that to get the other."

"You're a grateful fellow, I must say."

"I know I am," laughed Will. "But listen, Foster. Didn't you see, just the minute the nominations were made, that Bonnett had been at work?"

"No, I didn't see it."

"Well, if Thorn had been the only nominee he'd have been elected as sure as fate, wouldn't he?"

"I don't know. Perhaps."

"Well, I know he would. But he wasn't the only one. Just as soon as Clark had nominated Thorn, who represented the North Hall and West Hall crowds, then some one else was put up, some one else that really represented another crowd. And so it went on till every separate crowd in the class had a man."

"Well?"

"Well, it was all done in such a way that no one suspected what was going on. And there wasn't the ghost of a show for any one of the six. Well, after they'd all had a chance and every one could see that there wasn't much show for any one of the six to be elected, then Bonnett comes along with his fine work, and without saying a word about the combine he'd made, he really appealed to it, after all, and sprung my name on the class at a time when the fellows he knew he could depend upon would get together."

"I hadn't thought of it in that way," replied Foster slowly. "It may be you're right."

"'Right'? Of course I'm right! and yet I don't believe there are a half-dozen fellows in the class that suspected a thing. And Bonnett has got me right where he wants me and you'll see next year what'll happen."

"If it really is as you say, Bonnett is smarter than I gave him credit for being. You're not committed, though, Will."

"Better ask Bonnett about that," retorted Will. "Of course I'm not actually, but I wouldn't have taken the place if you hadn't pushed me into it."

"I'm glad I did, then," said Foster cordially.

For several days following the election the life of the college moved on in its regular way and there was little of special interest. The work in the classrooms had fallen into its regular grooves, the football team was in training for the autumn contests, there was the

annual "rushing" by the various fraternities among the more desirable freshmen, and to all appearances Winthrop had settled down into the somewhat monotonous routine of the college year.

Every night Mott had come to Will's room until Foster began to rebel at the too evident attentions of the freshman. Will laughingly had upheld his *protégé,* and, indeed, since he had decided not to do anything more in the matter of the theft of the ice cream from the president's house, he had felt somehow that he ought to do his best to hold the perplexing freshman to his legitimate tasks.

It was Saturday night and Mott had come for his daily visit. He still was as demure as ever, and Will was as convinced as ever he had been that his freshman admirer was in need of his own close personal attention.

"Hello, Mott," he called out as his visitor entered. "What mischief have you been up to to-day?"

"I haven't been in any mischief," replied Mott soberly. "I don't see why you always ask me that question the first thing."

"It is strange. I can't account for it myself," responded Will with a laugh.

"It's true what you said about Splinter," said Mott.

"What did I say about him?"

"You know," responded Mott demurely. "And it's true. What do you suppose he said to me to-day? And right before the whole class."

"What did he say? What was it?"

"Why, he said to me, and the whole class could hear it too," added Mott as if he was sorrowing over the weakness of the professor in Greek, "he said, 'Mr. Mott, I can't find out that you know anything. I don't believe you do. I don't believe you know that Plato and Xenophon are dead.'"

"What did you say?"

"Why, I said, 'Why, professor, I didn't even know they were sick.'"

CHAPTER X

THE RAPID, ROUNDED, ROLLING ORB

WILL PHELPS threw back his head and laughed aloud. Mott's expressionless countenance was of itself sufficient to start his mirth, but when Will pictured to himself the helpless anger of the professor of Greek and the demure countenance of the rebuked freshman gazing in apparent surprise at the childlike man and uttering his apparently innocent reply to the rebuke that had been given, his laughter broke forth afresh. "What did Splinter do then?" he inquired at last.

"Not much of anything. Why should he? What was there for him to do? I am sure I was not to blame for not knowing the old guys were sick, much less dead. But the class did seem a bit surprised at my ignorance," Mott added dryly, a twinkle appearing once more in his eyes. "I did my best to hush them up, but they seemed to think what I had said was funny."

"Didn't the professor enjoy it?"

"He didn't seem to. He jumped to his feet and piped out that he wanted 'order' in the classroom. After a time the fellows quieted down, but Splinter didn't appear to be satisfied, for when we were going out of the room he touched me on the shoulder and

asked me to stay. I was in a great hurry. I didn't really see how I could stay, Mr. Phelps, but I didn't want to seem unmindful of the special attention he had given me, so unselfishly I gave up my own plans and stayed."

"That was good of you."

"Yes, but I don't deserve any special credit for it. It's my nature. I was born that way."

Again Will laughed, for the young freshman's face bore an expression of mock humility that was almost irresistible. "What did Splinter have to say for himself?" he inquired.

"Oh, he's a kind-hearted man in his way, though his way isn't like mine, Mr. Phelps. Not in the least like it. He gave me a lot of good advice, but I'm afraid I wasn't quite so responsive as he thought I ought to be, for his face fired up toward the last, and taking hold of me by the arm he looked into my face and said, 'I am very much afraid, young man, that Satan has gotten hold of you.'"

"What did you say?"

"Not much. I looked up into his face, and then I looked at his hand on my arm, and then I looked up at him again and said, 'I'm afraid he has too, professor. I quite agree with you.'"

Both Will and Foster laughed and shouted so loudly and long that Miller, one of their classmates, came running to the room demanding to know "what was up." Will related what Mott had just told him and then Miller too joined in the shout. And throughout

it all Mott never once smiled, but gazed first at one of the juniors and then at another as if he was meekly striving to understand what the cause of the noisy demonstration might be.

"I don't know what is the trouble with some people," said Mott slowly. "You can't seem to please them, no matter what you do. Now if I had told Splinter he was mistaken when he said the devil had got hold of me I don't believe he would have liked that, and yet when I agreed with him he didn't seem to be very much pleased either."

"Strange he shouldn't have been," shouted Miller as he led another outburst of laughter. "What did he do then?"

"Nothing. He looked at me as if he wanted very much to say something, but the English language probably didn't fit in very well, and if he had used Greek—why, I didn't have my 'pony' along with me, so I'm afraid it would not have had any immediate effect on me. I waited and waited, but all he did was to stare at me, so finally I explained that I had another 'date' and must be excused."

"And he let you go?"

"Of course. Why not? Why should he have objected?"

"Oh, nothing," laughed Miller. "You may hear from him again."

"I shall be pleased to. I don't lay up anything against him."

Again the three juniors laughed noisily and Miller

said, "Well, Mott, you certainly are the richest freshman old Winthrop has struck for many a day."

"I don't see why you say that," replied Mott reproachfully.

"I don't see why I do either," responded Miller laughingly.

"I didn't come over here to-night to talk about myself, Mr. Phelps," said Mott. "I came to tell you you'd better look after one of the men in your own class."

"That's kind of you, Mott. When you've finished up your work for the faculty you turn to the poor benighted juniors, do you?"

"You needn't laugh, Mr. Phelps," said Mott reproachfully. "I mean just what I say."

"Who's the man we ought to look after?"

"Thorn."

"What's the matter with him?"

"He's gone to the bad."

"'Gone to the bad'! Why, you freshman, Thorn is going to be a minister."

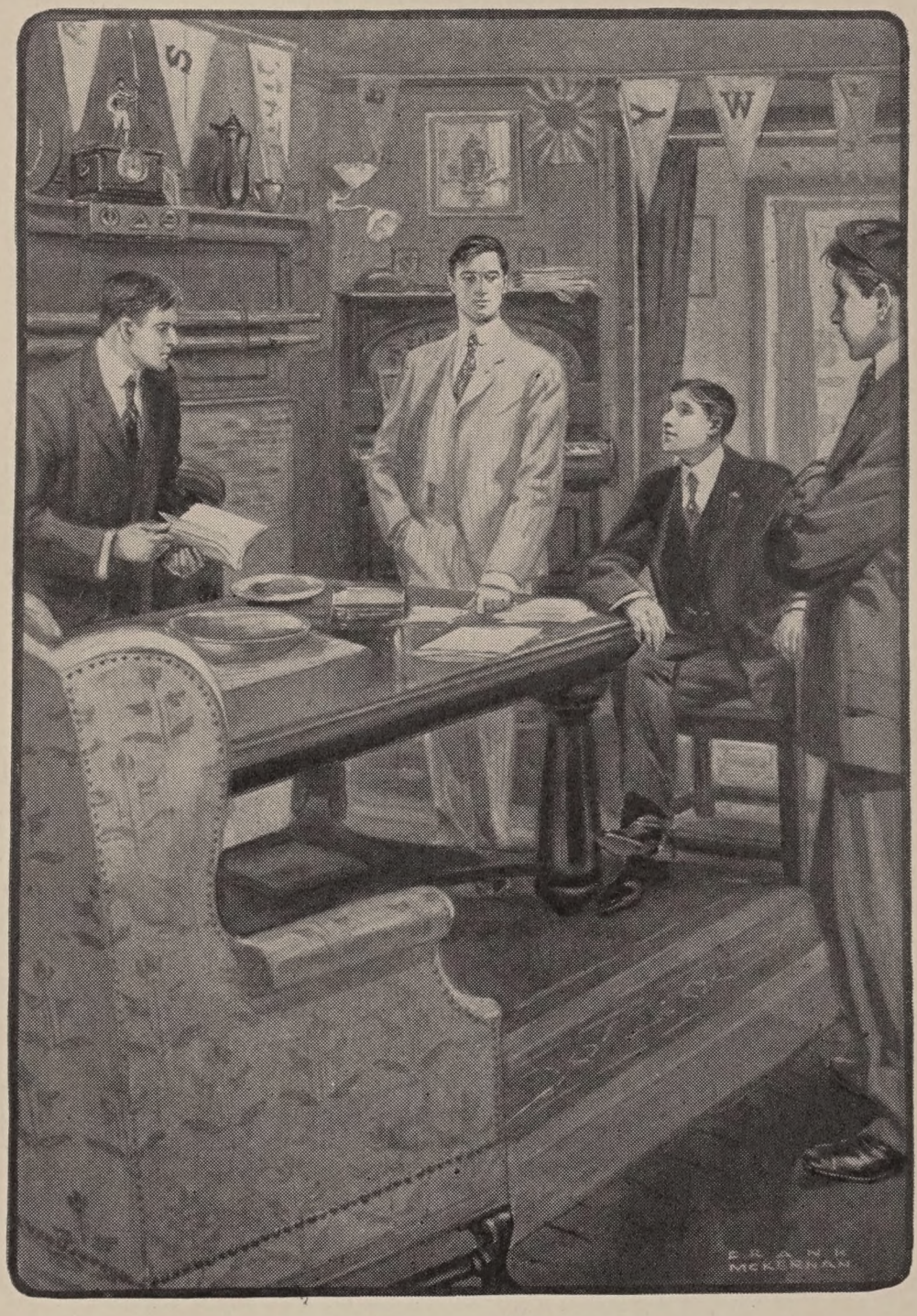
"I don't know anything about that, but he's gone to the bad all the same."

"What do you mean?"

"Just what I say. He's gone to the bad," repeated the freshman positively.

"You're dreaming, freshman. He's as sober as a judge."

"Well, you can believe me or not, but I'm telling you the truth. I saw him myself."



"'I don't see why you say that,'
replied Mott reproachfully."
Page 102.

"Saw him? Saw him what?"

"Go to the bad."

"When?"

"Yesterday."

"Yesterday was Sunday. Man alive, you've been fooled!"

"I know what I saw," persisted Mott sturdily.

"What did you see?" demanded Will.

"I saw Thorn going to the bad. I know he was one of the men that ran against you, Mr. Phelps, for president of the junior class, but I thought you might like to hear of it. You've helped me, you know."

"Tell us what you mean. I can't believe you saw Thorn doing anything he ought not to."

"I didn't say I did, Mr. Phelps."

"Why, yes, you did. You said you did."

"I beg your pardon. I said I saw him go to the bad." Mott had moved to a position nearer the door, but no one in the room had noted his change. "I'll tell you how it was. I saw him yesterday with his Bible under his arm starting off for the Mills. He has a Sunday-school class there every Sunday afternoon, and they tell me it's the hardest, worst lot there that can be found in the State. And if he goes over to teach them, and if that isn't going to the bad, then I don't understand English any better than I do Greek. Good-night, Mr. Phelps." And without waiting for a response, Mott slid through the doorway, ran hastily down the stairs, and speedily vanished from sight.

"You're spoiling that freshman, Will," said Foster after their visitor was gone.

"You give me too much credit. You forget I've known him only a few days."

"But you are, just the same."

"How?"

"He's a slick article, and he comes around here to report just enough to let you know he's up to mischief and still not tell you all. He makes you laugh at him, and he thinks that's enough. You mustn't forget, Will, that you're one of the committee on the honor system now."

"So I am. That's as true as you live, Foster, and I'd never thought of it once. Let me see, it's made up of the president of the senior class, the president of the junior class, and the president of the sophomore class, isn't it?"

"You know it is."

"Well, I confess I hadn't thought much about it. How is it the fourth man is chosen? There are four on the committee, aren't there?"

"Yes; four. The fourth is chosen by the other three."

"That's so. I suppose there'll be a meeting called soon."

"Very likely, and you mark my words! One of the first cases you'll have to deal with will be young Mott. You're getting tied up by him."

"You don't like him, Foster."

"No, I don't. He was impertinent to Splinter."

"No doubt. But that doesn't excuse Splinter for abusing him before the whole class. I don't feel very bad about that, I confess."

"It isn't one thing alone. It's the make-up of the chap. He'll get you into trouble, you mark my words. It's in him."

"Come on, fellows. Come over to my room. I've got a letter there from Alden.[1] They want to arrange for a debate with us," said Miller.

"They certainly have their nerve."

"We'll need all ours if we win," responded Miller, who was known as one of the best debaters in college. Will Phelps himself was also looked upon as a promising man in this same line, and his interest in the statement which had been made was naturally at once aroused.

"Say, fellows," he said quickly, "before we go I want to read you a poem that has just come in for the 'Lit.' Tell me what you think of it."

There were two publications by the students of Winthrop College—one a weekly journal known as the "Winthrop Student." This publication was of general interest to students, friends, and alumni of the college, chronicling the events of the college life and providing a means of expression for the students. Its accounts of the deeds of the various athletic teams were all very full, and every notable achievement of the alumni was duly set forth. The board of editors

[1] Alden College was Winthrop's nearest and closest rival. See "Winning His 'W.'"

was made up for the greater part of students selected after competitive trials and certain fixed requirements as to work and contributions to the pages of the "Student," who had ambitions toward a journalistic career when the college course should be duly completed. The "Student" was a credit to the college and a position on its editorial board was considered one of the honors.

In addition to the weekly "Student," there was another magazine having the title, "Winthrop Literary Magazine." This was issued monthly during the college year, and it was looked upon as being of a superior literary quality to the journalistic pages of the "Student," though as to whether this claim was true or not was a matter of some difference of opinion among the Winthrop students. Its reputation, however, was established on this somewhat unsubstantial basis, and its editors were selected from upper-classmen alone and only from those who had written for its columns articles—stories, essays, poems, reviews, etc.—that were considered worthy of special recognition.

Will Phelps had written two articles for the "Lit," as the magazine was called, in his sophomore year, and at the close of the year had been duly selected as one of the board for the following year. The honor had appealed strongly to him, and during the summer he had worked busily upon a "poem" which he planned to have appear in one of the early issues of the magazine.

As the time for using it was drawing nigh his courage somewhat failed him. He read and re-read, corrected, revised and changed, wrote and re-wrote—sometimes assuring himself that he had really written something of worth, and then with a sinking of his heart feeling positive that the "stuff" was absolutely worthless.

At last he hit upon the plan of reading it to some of his fellows without explaining who the author was, and thus obtaining a much more candid judgment than otherwise could be possible.

"What's the subject, Will?" demanded Miller lightly.

"Light."

"Not very novel," laughed Foster.

"The treatment seems to be fresh, though," replied Will, turning his face away as he spoke, for fear that its expression might betray him.

"What is it?"

"Why, the writer takes up the first thrills the darkness must have felt when the shafts of light shot through it, then he goes on to the world on which it shone, then into the lives of men, then as it appeared in the Light of the World."

"Plenty of room, anyway," suggested Miller.

"Room enough to get lost in," assented Foster. "Probably some freshman. Come on! Let's go over to Miller's room and see the letter from Alden."

"Hold on a minute! Let's hear the poem," said Miller. "Is it long?"

"Not very. Only about fifty lines. It begins with an apostrophe to the sun.

> "Thou rapid, rolling, rounded orb
> Whose beams celestial——"

"Hold on, Will! that's enough!" said Miller. "It's a freshman. Who's the guilty one? Only the Richmond colored preacher and freshmen believe 'the sun do move.' This fellow talks about a 'rapid, rolling' sun. We don't know any such kind. Put it up and come over to my room."

CHAPTER XI

REALISM

"IN spite of all that you fellows say, I think there's something in the poem," declared Will Phelps emphatically. He had turned about on his revolving chair as he spoke and thrust the manuscript into a drawer in his desk. His cheeks were scarlet and he was desirous of avoiding the gaze of his classmates until he could recover a measure of self-possession.

"Oh, bother the freshman's drivel about the sun!" exclaimed Miller impatiently. "Come along over to my room and we'll study out what Alden has to say for herself. For my part I think she must have lost her senses to think she can stand up before Winthrop in a debate."

"I hope the judges will take the same view," laughed Will, relieved to have the subject of the conversation changed. "We lost two of our best debaters with last year's class."

"Oh, that's what they always say," retorted Foster as he reached for his cap. "I've heard that about the football team and the track team, and in fact about almost everything in college. There isn't anything done but some poor chap comes along and says, 'We're done for this time. We lost the best men we had with

the graduation of the seniors.' I'm sick and tired of it myself, and I don't believe a word of it. What has been done can be done again. That's my motto every day in the week."

"What about any language as compared with the Greek?" retorted Will as the three juniors departed together from the building on their way to Miller's room to inspect the challenge for a debate. "Doesn't Splinter say the world has never seen such a language before or since? 'A perfect vehicle of expression of the clearest thinking of the greatest men.' Isn't that what he calls it? Oh, you needn't laugh," he quickly added. "I guess I know some things as well as others."

"Yes, Splinter did say that," admitted Foster, "but I thought you didn't have a very high opinion of him."

"I'm not talking about him, but about whether what he said was true or not," said Will.

"Oh, well, that's the exception that proves the rule," retorted Foster. "You have the authority of Splinter himself for that, you remember."

"Well, then, what about art?" demanded Will. "Didn't he say that Phidias and Praxiteles and some more of those old fellows set the standard for the world? Didn't he say nobody had ever come up to them and that nobody ever could or would?"

"That's his opinion."

"And not yours?"

"I didn't say so. It may not show itself in the

same way—I mean the real spirit of the thing, you understand, but that doesn't mean that it isn't here, does it?" said Foster. "I don't believe the spirit of the thing is dead at all. It just shows itself in other ways, that's all."

"Well, how about poetry, then? Why don't we keep up with the old fellows in that if what you say is true? Ask Splinter who was the greatest poet that ever lived. What would he say?"

"He'd say Homer, and then he'd go right on to give his lecture in which he'd explain that there might not have been any Homer, after all; that what we call 'Homer' was just a collection of a whole lot of poems written by a bigger lot of men and sung by the 'wandering bards or minstrels'—I think that's what he calls them. If the whole American people should get right down to business I believe for my part they'd turn out as good an article as Homer."

"Don't you believe it, Foster!" said Will warmly. "Why, take it right in our own American life. You know what Bryant, and Longfellow, and Poe, and Lowell, and Whittier, and Emerson did. Just show me the men, will you, that to-day can do even the work they did!"

"I can," suggested Miller dryly.

"You can! Well, just do it then," said Will warmly.

"The freshman that wrote about the 'rapid, rolling, rounded orb, Whose beams celestial——' Why, you know him yourself. For my part I don't think

you've any right to keep back his name from a waiting and expectant world."

The laugh that arose was not soothing to Will's feelings, but the darkness concealed the expression upon his face. In nowise daunted, however, he said boldly, "Well, never mind the poets, then. Show me the artists who can touch the old masters, will you!"

"I can," said Miller quietly.

"Who are they?" demanded Will sharply.

"If you'll go down to New York with me in the Christmas vacation I'll show you some work that'll put the old masters out of the game," replied Miller.

"Perhaps you can, but——"

"You don't believe it?"

"I didn't say so."

"No, but you implied it," responded Miller with much apparent feeling. "And yet I could prove it to you. There's a man that lives near me and he's made a lot of money in charcoal. His name is Dennis——"

"I guess I've heard of him," interrupted Will with a laugh.

"No doubt. No doubt. His fame has gone abroad throughout the land. But now that he's got a pile of money he's gone in for art. He goes in for realism—for what he calls the real thing. He took me into his house last summer to see a new painting he'd just bought. He said he'd paid twenty-one thousand three hundred and thirty-three dollars and thirty-three cents for it. The artist thought Mr. Dennis ought to have paid him the odd fraction of the cent more,

but Mr. Dennis declared 'he knew what was what in art and no paint dauber couldn't never fool him no time. No sir! Not on your life.'"

"What was the painting?" inquired Foster.

"The title of it was 'A Hailstorm on the Mountain.' Talk about your old masters! Why, they don't know the first principles of 'we moderns.' Mr. Dennis said so. And he went on to tell me that when he had the picture hung up in his palatial mansion he superintended the hanging himself, but he said he wouldn't do it again."

"Why not?" laughed Foster.

"Said he caught such a cold he thought he'd have pneumonia. You see those hailstones were so realistic. He said too, that the men who were hanging the painting for him had to put on ulsters and arctics before they were done with it, and it was really one of the warmest days in August when they were putting the picture up on his walls. He said the men were sneezing so by the time the picture was really in place that the house fairly shook."

"I guess that's doing the artistic some," laughed Will.

"Well, you'd think so if you saw the painting. He had another that was even more realistic than the 'Hailstorm on the Mountain.'"

"You don't say so!"

"Yes, I do say so. It was a picture by D'Auber Mudd. Ever hear of him?"

"I confess my ignorance."

"Well, you are ignorant, and no mistake. Mr. Dennis paid the world-famed artist exactly seven hundred dollars and ninety-eight cents for the work of art."

"What was it a picture of?"

"It was an animal portrait."

"A what? You mean an animated portrait, don't you?"

"I mean just what I say. I always do," retorted Miller sharply. "Mr. Dennis has a pet fox terrier named Barkis."

"Good name. Where did he get it?"

"Oh, Mr. Dennis is a literary man as well as connoisseur in art," replied Miller. "He had a magnificent set of Dickens he'd bought about the same time he purchased the fox terrier. Paid two hundred and four dollars and a quarter for the set, though they wanted two hundred and five for it. Mr. Dennis said it was a set in three calf."

"Tree calf, he meant, didn't he?" laughed Will.

"I don't know what he meant. That's what he said. Then he paid a dollar and seventy-nine cents for the dog. As I was telling you, he bought the set of Dickens at the same time he got the dog, and, having the books, I suppose he didn't think he'd got his money's worth unless he read them a little. So he did—a very little. But he read enough to get as far in 'David Copperfield' as 'Barkis is willin',' and immediately he fastened upon that as the name for his new pet."

"What about the portrait, the animal portrait by Mr. D'Auber Mudd?" inquired Foster with a laugh.

"I'm coming to that. Mr. Dennis induced D'Auber Mudd to give up his studio while he was working on the portrait and bring his brushes right to the house and do the work there. It took him just three days, and Mr. Dennis tried to get him to discount his bill because the artist saved his rent and luncheons while he was there. But the painter man wouldn't do it."

"Too bad," said Will sympathetically.

"No, only one. That is, only one that was real bad. Well, the animal portrait at last was all completed, and Mr. Dennis had it placed on an easel in his own room which he called his 'den.' I wish you could see it."

"Which, the den or the animal portrait?" demanded Foster.

"Both. I was speaking of the 'den,' but I really mean the portrait of Barkis."

"Speaking likeness?" inquired Will.

"More than that. It was realism raised to the nth power. Why, do you know, the very first time the door was opened into the 'den' after the animal portrait had been put in place on the easel, Mr. Dennis' pet cat came into the room, and what do you suppose took place?"

"I can't imagine. Don't keep me in this suspense! Tell me! Tell me now!" said Will.

"Well, sir, the cat gave one look at the animal por-

trait and then bolted straight through the plate-glass window into the street, and never came back. Cost Mr. Dennis twenty-nine dollars and sixty-seven cents to have a new one put in its place, but he said he didn't begrudge a cent o' it, not a cent, for it just proved that he'd got his money's worth out o' D'Auber Mudd's animal portrait."

"Is that all?" inquired Foster softly.

"No, it isn't all! When Mr. Dennis turned back into the room what do you suppose had happened to the animal portrait?"

"Can't imagine," said Will.

"Why, the hair—I mean the hair in the picture——"

"Was there hair in it? He must have had poor brushes, this D'Auber Mudd, to leave some of them right on the canvas," said Foster.

"I mean," said Miller slowly, "I mean the painted hair——"

"Did he paint the dog's hair?" said Will.

"No, he didn't paint the dog's hair. He painted the picture. But what I was about to say was that when Mr. Dennis turned back into the room, after the cat had been so frightened, and looked at the animal portrait, the pictured hair of the pictured dog was standing straight up on the back of the animal portrait. Talk about art! Talk about realism in art! I don't guess the best artist Greece ever had could touch this work of D'Auber Mudd, and he's one of 'we moderns,' as Mr. Dennis expresses it."

There was a brief silence when Miller concluded, and the three companions were near the place they were seeking. As they mounted the steps, Will Phelps stopped for a moment and said, "Say, Miller, the old Greeks were the greatest liars that ever lived, weren't they?"

"They were very successful at it," assented Miller.

"Could they beat the 'moderns'?"

"I cannot say."

"I can," retorted Will quietly. "Perhaps they did beat us in poetry and art, but for artistic and monumental lying they simply were outclassed. Miller, the palm belongs to you. You can beat the world."

"Thank you."

"You're welcome."

With a laugh the three classmates bounded up the stairway and in a moment burst into Miller's room. The two visitors seated themselves in the easiest of the chairs, while Miller began to search for the letter from Alden. An expression of perplexity on his face deepened into one of more serious import, when at last he turned and said, "Fellows, the letter is gone."

"Gone?" demanded Will, sitting quickly erect.

"Yes, it's gone. And that isn't the worst of it, either, for there are some other things gone too."

CHAPTER XII

BUTTER OF KINE

"WHAT do you mean?" demanded Phelps, leaping to his feet and quickly approaching his classmate's side.

"Just what I say. The letter from Alden is gone."

"Feel in your pockets. You may have left it there."

"I didn't. I left it right in this drawer. And there was another envelope right under it that had a ten-dollar bill in it. That's gone too!"

Foster had also approached his friends by this time, and the statement of Miller made both silent for a moment.

"That's pretty serious business, Miller," said Will at last. "Are you sure?"

"Yes. I left the two letters here together. The one with money in it I had just received from home. I put them in the same place."

"You ought to have locked the drawers," suggested Foster.

"Foster Bennett," retorted Miller sharply, "I've lived in this wicked world for nineteen years seven months and thirteen days. I've been guilty of many sins, but I never yet stooped so low as to say to anybody yet, 'I told you so.' No, sir. Not much!"

Foster laughed as he replied, "That's all right, Miller. But I don't think it's right to leave our doors and desks unlocked the way we do. And we all do it, you understand."

"Why isn't it right, I'd like to know?" demanded Miller.

"Well, it's too much like putting temptation in the way of some fellow."

"I guess this chap that took my money and the letter from Alden put himself in the way, all right. I didn't lead him into it. Think I'd do that with the last X I had in the world? Ah, my child, you don't know me."

Miller's face was woebegone, and Foster laughed again. "Any idea who took it?" he inquired.

"Not to speak of. It'll come out, though."

"What can we do about it now?" inquired Will seriously.

"Nothing."

"But what about the letter from Alden?"

"I can reply to that all right. I remember what was in the letter. They wanted a debate here the night before our football game."

"You know the fellow that wrote it?"

"Yes. We can call a meeting of the college just the same and decide what we'll do. I'll post a notice to-night. And, fellows, don't say anything about the loss of the letter or the money, either. We'll make a still-hunt for the fellow, and we'll find him too, before many moons. Wait a minute and I'll write three

notices and you can post them on the bulletin boards on your way back to your rooms."

"All right," laughed Will. "You're a good general, anyway, Miller, even if you can't keep your letters or your money."

"I am, am I? Well, I suppose it must be so since you say it is so."

"Of course. A good general always gets the work out of his men."

"Ah, yes, I see," responded Miller as he seated himself at his desk and rapidly wrote the three notices which were designed to call a meeting of the student body to consider the challenge of Alden for a debate on the evening preceding the annual football game between the two rival colleges.

As soon as the notices were ready, Will and Foster took them and at once departed. On their way back to their room they stopped and posted one of the three on the bulletin board in Newcomb Hall, one of the largest of the recitation buildings, and then made their way across the campus to the board which was in front of the college chapel.

"Hello! what's this?" said Will as he stopped for a moment before the board.

"What's what?"

"These circulars," replied Will as he tore one loose from the pile that was hanging from the bulletin board. "Come over here and we'll see what it is," he added as he led the way to the adjacent street-light.

Standing within the light, Will held up the circu-

lar and Foster peered over his shoulder and both boys eagerly read the printed slip.

ANNOUNCEMENT!

BUTTER OF KINE AND HONEY OF HYMETTUS!

Being sincerely desirous of introducing into modern life the perfection of all that was known to the ancient Greeks I have procured, at great expense and with infinite pains, samples of BUTTER OF KINE and HONEY OF HYMETTUS which I will distribute among the worthy people of this and adjacent towns at a price which will involve a great financial loss to myself.

The supply is large but nevertheless is somewhat limited, so that I shall be unable to bestow upon any one purchaser more than two pounds of the BUTTER OF KINE and one pound of the HONEY OF HYMETTUS. As long as the supply lasts it is all yours under the before-mentioned condition of sale, and the price paid, which will be spot cash!

NO TRUST OR I BUST!

While the supply lasts the price for the BUTTER OF KINE will be 15 cents per pound and for the HONEY OF HYMETTUS 16⅔ cents per pound. Owing to the extremely low price, patrons must come prepared to take their purchases away with them.

NO FREE DELIVERY!

Every man served in the order of his coming.

NO FAVORITES! NO FAVORITISM!

All will be treated exactly alike! First come, first served!
Sale to begin at Nine o'clock A. M., sharp!
Sale to continue until Eleven o'clock A. M., sharp!

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 15TH!

As the facilities for service at my home are somewhat restricted and I wish to deal courteously with all, it is especially requested that purchasers will apply at the front door!

APPLY AT THE FRONT DOOR!

Get in line! Come early but not often! The supply will quickly be exhausted! Positively the only sale! Remember the price! Terms, cash. No trust!

CORNER OF PARK STREET AND JACKSON ROAD, WINTHROP.

"What in the world is this?" demanded Foster when he had read the circular. "What do you make of it, Will?"

"That's where Splinter lives, corner of Park Street and Jackson Road."

"Yes. You don't think for a minute that he wrote it, do you?"

"Hardly," laughed Will. "The composition wouldn't be very flattering to him."

"I should say not. But what is it?"

"Probably some freshman joke on Splinter."

"You think he has any honey and butter?"

Will laughed as he thrust the circular into his pocket and said, "It isn't anything but a 'grind' on the poor old fellow. That's all there is to it."

"He'll never see it."

"No, he won't know anything about it."

On the following morning, however, which was Saturday, Will, having no recitations for the first hour following the services in the chapel, decided to walk down Park Street and discover if anything more than a mere printed prank had been implied in the circular. He had several times thought of the matter, but could not believe there was anything in it beyond the farcical announcement which might bring a smile to the face of any one who might chance to see it. If he had really believed there was anything more in the matter, as president of the junior class and a member of the committee on the honor system, he assured himself he would be in duty bound to interfere, but there was nothing to be feared he declared to himself again and again. It was merely a freshman prank, and like all such actions, probably inane,

though he had himself laughed when he had read the bombastic proclamation.

"Good morning, Mr. Phelps."

Will turned about at the salute and beheld young Mott swiftly approaching him. Somehow the coming of the freshman was unwelcome to Will, but he restrained his irritation and said pleasantly, "Hello, Mott. Why aren't you in your classroom?"

"Haven't any recitation this period. Going for a walk, Mr. Phelps? May I go with you?"

As Mott had not waited for a response, there was nothing to be said, and there was no surprise manifest when Will turned into Park Street, and, accompanied by his freshman companion, at last came within sight of the house of the professor of Greek.

"There must be a fire there, Mr. Phelps!" exclaimed Mott excitedly when the professor's home could be seen. "Just see the crowd! Come on! We can help! It must be a fire! Just look at the crowd!"

Without waiting for a reply, Mott had darted forward and was running swiftly toward the professor's house, but Will Phelps had stopped in blank amazement and was staring at the sight before him. The yard appeared to be filled with people. They surged up the steps and were clambering about the piazza of the house. The crowd overflowed into the street, and as Will turned and looked about him he could see that people were coming from every direction. Farmers were shouting to their horses and

driving swiftly along the country roads. Even the small boy was not to be denied his rights, and he too was in evidence wherever Will looked.

His first feeling of amazement gave place to one of amusement, and this in turn was quickly followed by a feeling of indignation. Personally he had never been drawn to the professor of Greek, and the man's childlike simplicity, combined as it was with a dogged obstinacy, had already been a source, as we know,[1] of trouble to him. But when he thought of the surging crowd and the perplexed and doubtless helpless man before it, he instantly began to run, and soon had forced his way into the noisy assembly in the yard and speedily gained a position in the front ranks, where he could see what was occurring on the piazza.

In front of the door the professor himself was standing, his scanty hair disheveled, his eyes shining with excitement, and vainly endeavoring to pacify a huge, red-faced Irishwoman, who, with her bonnet awry and her red shawl still clinging to her form, though in part it trailed upon the floor, was loudly demanding that she should receive her share of the butter and honey.

"But—but—but—my dear woman," feebly protested the professor, "I—I haven't any butter for sale."

"Bedad! An' phwat for did yez say so for, thin?" demanded the excited woman, brandishing in the face of the distracted man a copy of the circular.

[1] See "Winning His 'W.'"

"'But—but—but—my dear woman, . . .
I haven't any butter for sale.'"

Page 124.

"But—but—but, my good—my good woman, I didn't say so. There's some mistake. I—I—never sold a pound of butter in all my life."

"Indade! An' isn't this the corner o' Park Strate? Till me that, mon!"

"It is. It is, indeed," acknowledged the professor.

"An' isn't that Jackson Road?" she demanded, pointing, as she spoke, at the adjacent road that formed the corner upon which the professor's house stood.

"It is. It certainly is. But—but—my good woman——"

"An' isn't that what the paper do be afther sayin'?" she demanded noisily, placing a huge red finger upon the line at the end of the circular and holding it triumphantly before the professor's face.

"Yes, yes, yes. It does say so. But dear me. My good—my good woman, I only wish it was in my power to give you some of the honey of Hymettus. I was once in Athens and I distinctly recall——"

"Tut! tut! mon! It isn't to hear about yer visitin' th' haythen cities that I've left me wash-toob an' come up here this marnin'. Will yer honor be afther tellin' me loike if ye intend to live up t' yer word or not? It's that new kind of butter an' a sip o' that honey I'm wantin'. Pat, he says, 'Give th' mon his money an' get yer goods.' Yis, sir, them's his very words jist as soon as he do be gettin' yer letter from th' post office."

"Yes, yes. Precisely so. But—but—but, my good

woman, I did not write your husband. I have had no correspondence with your husband. Patrick, I fawncy his name must be."

"Ye can fawncy th' name or not, but it's a good name! One o' the best!" retorted the woman warmly.

"Yes, yes. I was not casting any reflections upon his name. No. Not in the slightest. Not in the least. I was merely trying to explain that I had not had any correspondence with him on the subject of butter."

"Ye didn't? Thin tell me, mon, how came it that he got yer letter out o' th' post office, will ye? I seen him get th' letter wid me own eyes."

CHAPTER XIII

WILL'S ASSISTANCE

"I—I—REITERATE my statement," stammered the professor. "I—I——"

"I don't care what yez do if ye'll be afther sillin' me th' butter."

"I was about to say that I had never to the best of my recollection ever sent any epistolary communication to your worthy husband."

"How, thin, did he get yer letter?" demanded the excited woman. "Look at all these poor souls here, will yez!" she shouted as she pointed at the assembly in the yard. "It's no way for a foine gintleman, the loike of yez, to be afther treatin' thim."

A murmur of applause arose from those who were standing nearest the speakers, and baskets were waved in the air in token of approval. The helpless professor was staring blankly at the crowd, among which a goodly number of the college boys could now be seen, and who, it is to be feared, were not doing all that lay within their power to soothe the feelings of the assembled people.

Will Phelps had at first been unable to restrain his delight, and had laughed aloud at the ludicrous sight. The expression upon Mott's face—for the young freshman had been at the junior's side throughout the

interview—had been that of one who was unable to understand what it all meant. He had gazed at the assembly and then at the perplexed and helpless professor of Greek as if he was sympathizing with all who were concerned, but not a smile had appeared on his countenance. His lamb-like appearance of innocence had done much to arouse Will, who at last forced his way up the steps to the professor's side, and turning, faced the assembly.

"My friends," he said quietly, "you have all been the victims of some joker, and probably a freshman joker at that." He glanced at Mott as he spoke, for the freshman was gazing up into his face as if he still was unable to comprehend what the excitement was all about. "The sooner you go home the better it will be for you all and the less will be said. I am certain the professor has had nothing to do with this. There is no butter for sale here and no honey. He feels as badly about the mistake as you do, but he has explained his part, or rather his lack of any part, in this prank, and there is nothing more for him to do. He regrets the annoyance to which you all have been subjected and begs that you will now leave."

Will never knew how it was that he had taken upon himself the place of spokesman, but the utter helplessness of the childlike professor and the insistence of the crowd at last had so aroused him that, hardly aware of what he was doing, he had advanced to the aid of the man.

His words at first had been received by the

gathering in blank and silent astonishment, but this feeling soon gave place to a look of chagrin, and before he had concluded he could see that many were slinking away as if their supreme desire was to be found anywhere except in the midst of the dupes of the freshman prank.

Not all, however, departed, and the woman who had been the spokesman still was holding her ground. Turning directly to her, Will said, for the professor had ceased to speak when the junior had advanced to the piazza, "There's nothing more to be said, madam. There isn't any butter or honey for sale here."

"What for did he say there was, thin?"

"But he didn't say so."

"Faith! an' I have th' letter!" she shouted as she held the epistle before her.

"Let me see it, if you please."

The "letter" was a circular exactly like the one he himself had torn from the bulletin board, but it had been folded and placed in an envelope directed to Mr. Patrick Hennessy. Will instantly was aware that the perpetrators of the prank had probably sent hundreds of similar letters, and the presence of so many people in the professor's yard was explained. "That isn't a letter!" he said. "That's only a printed circular like a good many others that were sent through the mails. It's some joke. We all regret it——"

"Yez seem t' be reconciled yerself! It's foine work for the loikes o' yez to take a lady from her toob

an' be afther wastin' th' mornin'. Faith! 'tis a foine bit o' work! I'm thinkin' Pat may have a word wid yez, whin I till him o' the way ye've trated me."

"We are all sorry for it, Mrs. Hennessy."

"Faith! an' I think ye'll be more sorry whin Pat comes to see yez!" muttered the angry woman as, grasping her basket firmly, she turned about and started from the yard, unmindful of the greetings of the college boys who had remained upon the premises.

"They're going now, professor. I think we'd better go into the house," suggested Will. The professor at once yielded, and Will entered the house with him.

"It's too bad, professor. I'm very sorry you have been put to all this annoyance."

"It is inexplicable! I am unable to comprehend what this assemblage portends."

"It was a prank, that's all."

"But that was quite sufficient!" retorted the man, a faint tinge of red appearing on his cheeks as he spoke. His anger somehow reminded Will of the futile rage of a canary bird that scolded and fluttered helplessly about in its cage. "Personally I look upon it as an outrage. It is a reflection upon the dignity of my position. It must and it shall be atoned for! Mr. Phelps, I shall look to you to see that the guilty miscreants are brought to justice."

"Look to me!" exclaimed Will aghast. "You mustn't do that, professor!"

"But I shall do so, nevertheless. You were the one who explained it all. You knew what the perpetra-

tion really was. You elucidated the causes and dispersed the—the assembly, which, to say the least, was somewhat unique in its prevailing characteristics and somewhat homogeneous in its composition." The professor shuddered as he recalled the anger of Mrs. Hennessy. "They seemed to infer that you were implicated to a certain extent in the onslaught."

"Do you mean that you think I had something to do with this?" demanded Will.

"Ah, my young friend, I can by the process of ratiocination and induction infer at least that you were not entirely devoid of knowledge. Who was it that explained to the assembly how it had come to pass that apparently I had been in correspondence with Patrick Hennessy on the subject of the honey of Hymettus? Who was it that knew the origin of the mysterious attack? Ah, my young friend, in inductive logic there is nothing to be compared with the methods employed by Socrates and Plato. It is true that Locke assumed——"

"But, professor," interrupted Will sharply, for he was angry at the implied insinuation, "you don't really mean to say, do you, that you think I had anything to do with this?"

The professor smiled blandly, but the dogged expression upon his countenance was not in the least changed. "You know as to that as well as I, Mr. Phelps. Indeed, I may say you understand even better than I. Your knowledge is experimental, while mine is inferential. You will excuse me, Mr. Phelps.

I have some duties that will permit no further delay. I shall look to you to see that these dastardly culprits are brought to justice. Ahem! Do you fawncy, Mr. Phelps that—ah—that rumors and reports of this—this escapade will find their way into the columns of the press?"

"I can't say," replied Will shortly. "Good morning, professor!"

"Good morning, sir! Good morning! Ah, just a word, Mr. Phelps. If you choose to report to me more in detail as to this matter before—ah—before let us say seven o'clock to-morrow evening, it is possible, yes, I may say it is quite probable that I shall not bring up the matter before the meeting of the faculty. Otherwise——"

Will Phelps was too angry to listen to more, and was down the steps of the piazza before the professor had ceased speaking. He was so indignant that he was unaware that any one was on the street, and when young Mott, who evidently had been waiting for the junior's reappearance, joined him, Will did not speak.

"Too bad for Splinter wasn't it, Mr. Phelps?" said Mott demurely.

"Look here, Mott!" said Will sharply, stopping for a moment as he spoke and looking keenly at the freshman, "do you know that Splinter declares he knows who is at the bottom of all this?"

"Does he? I pity the poor chaps, then," said Mott innocently.

"He says I'm one of them."

"You? You, Mr. Phelps?"

"That's what he says."

"That's too bad. What will you do about it, Mr. Phelps?"

"I don't know. I haven't decided yet. He says if I don't report before seven o'clock to-morrow evening he'll take my name before the faculty meeting."

"That would be too bad, Mr. Phelps. Of course, it wouldn't amount to anything, for the whole college knows you didn't have anything to do with it."

"That remains to be seen."

"No, it doesn't. No one will believe it besides Splinter."

"Mott, how many of those circulars were sent out by mail?" suddenly demanded Will.

"How should I know, Mr. Phelps?" responded Mott meekly.

"Answer my question!"

"Why, I heard this morning that four hundred were."

"Sent to all the towns around, as well as to Winthrop?"

"That's what I heard."

"Oh, you did!" Will laughed, for the absurdity of the prank had returned in his thoughts. "Mott," he added, "what am I going to do with you?"

"Lend me five dollars, Mr. Phelps," responded Mott promptly.

"What for?"

"Because I need it. I want to pay some bills."

"But you'd owe me five dollars. You might as well owe for the bills as to owe me. You'd be in debt just the same."

"Not long. I'll pay you just as soon as I hear from home."

"Which will be when?" laughed Will as he handed a bank-note to the freshman.

"Next week," responded Mott glibly, as he thrust the money into his pocket. "Something strange about the wings that riches are said to have, isn't there, Mr. Phelps?"

"I don't know. They seem to fly away all right."

"That's it. That's just what I mean. The wings always seem to be for flying away. Now you'd think if money really had wings that sometimes it would fly toward you. But it never does," he added mournfully. "It's always in one direction and that's from you."

"This five-dollar bill seemed to come toward you, didn't it?"

"You just watch it! It'll be gone so soon I won't know I've had it. Why, yesterday I had a ten-dollar bill that I never thought of having. But it wasn't fairly in my hands before T——before it was gone," Mott hastily corrected himself.

Will Phelps turned sharply upon his companion at the words. Miller's loss of a ten-dollar bill from his desk on the preceding day suddenly occurred to him, and the freshman's words had brought the fact to his mind in a manner that was startling.

"Where did you get the ten dollars from, Mott?" he inquired quietly.

"What do you want to know that for, Mr. Phelps?" Mott's manner had not changed, but to his troubled friend it seemed as if the question had startled him.

"Why, ten-dollar bills aren't picked up every day," Will replied, striving to speak as if the matter was a casual one. "Speaking about riches having wings," he added, "I know a fellow that—that lost ten dollars yesterday."

"Where? Where, Mr. Phelps?" said the freshman quickly. "I'll go and look for it right away. Perhaps if I can find it I'll be able to pay you back before I get money from home."

"It wouldn't be yours if you should find it."

"It wouldn't? Let me get my hands on it and see!"

Will laughed, though a trifle uneasily, and as he turned away from his companion to go to his rooms he was troubled far more than he cared to acknowledge even to himself. Was it possible that there could be any connection between Mott's "discovery" of a ten-dollar bill and Miller's loss? That the freshman was implicated and even a leading spirit in every prank his class had thus far played in college he was fully convinced. Mott was mischievous, a troublesome spirit, not inclined to study, and ready to be a leader in any escapade, he knew, but was there a defect in him so great as to indicate he might be

guilty of worse things? It was difficult for Will to believe it, and yet the fact of Miller's loss and Mott's gain was a coincidence if nothing more. And Will Phelps was seriously troubled.

When he entered his rooms he discovered that Foster was not there, and it was with something of a feeling of relief that he seated himself at his desk to prepare for a recitation in chemistry that came at twelve o'clock. His thoughts were wandering, however, and when a half-hour had elapsed he suddenly arose and said aloud, "I'll do it!"

Seizing his cap from the table he ran hastily from the room and soon was walking swiftly down the street.

CHAPTER XIV

THE RESULT OF AN INTERVIEW

WILL PHELPS did not stop until he had turned into the yard of the house in which Doctor Brown lived and had mounted the steps of the rambling piazza and vigorously pushed the button to announce his presence. Several times before this he had visited the young professor and greatly enjoyed his interviews with the man who, in spite of his boyish appearance, had at the very beginning of his work commanded the respect and enthusiastic support of the entire student body. And as for the work in his classroom, Will had found it the most enjoyable of all his studies thus far in his college course. The very fact that Doctor Brown was a man with whom it was impossible to shirk had increased the enjoyment and enlarged the respect of all who had "elected" history, for it was as true in Winthrop as it is everywhere that students only love the teacher whom they can respect, and that there was a very genuine and general respect for the young professor who had lately joined the college faculty, the fact that all were compelled to work hard for him bore ample evidence.

In a brief time Will was admitted into Doctor Brown's study, and despite the evident task in which the professor was busied the junior was warmly wel-

comed. "I'm almost afraid I'm making a nuisance of myself," began Will as he accepted the proffered seat, "I come here so often."

"That's what I'm here for," replied the young professor pleasantly.

"To have me make a nuisance of myself?" laughed Will.

"That is not the best way in which to put it. I look upon myself as one whose first business is to get himself in touch with the real life of the students here. I must help them, whatever I may teach. Oh, of course," he added lightly, "I don't mean to say that the work of the classroom is not important and that I shall not place a proper insistence upon that."

"You don't need to say so," responded Will. "The fellows all say you are about the 'hardest' man on the faculty. But they like it. They all like it," he added hastily in some confusion.

"Thank you!" replied Doctor Brown with a laugh.

"Oh, that isn't all they say," Will hastened to add. "They know you are interested in them and they like you all the better, because you just make them do their work too. But they think you are something more than a teacher. They think you are a man." Will's enthusiasm, which was ever keen over anything that aroused him, had led him to speak warmly, but he was instantly fearful he had said too much. Would the young professor suspect him of "boot-licking," which in the vocabulary of the college boys was well-nigh the most heinous of all offences?

He was relieved when Doctor Brown said quietly, "Thank you, Phelps. Your words have done me good. It isn't too often we have encouragement given us. The task of holding a fellow up to the mark and making him do the best there is in him is not always a pleasant one, and yet it is what we are here for and what will be appreciated afterwards, if it is not now."

"That's so, doctor! That's perfectly true!" Will did not perceive the trace of a smile that lurked in the corners of the mouth of the young professor, and he went on eagerly. "How am I doing in my work in history?" he inquired.

"Quite well. You can do better," replied the professor quietly.

Will's heart sank, for he had believed himself to be doing exceptionally well in the work of which Doctor Brown had charge. There had even been before him a vision of the prize in history, and this moderate praise of the man was somewhat chilling in its effect. He felt even a slight tinge of resentment, for he himself was aware of how much more time and labor he had been devoting to this study than ever before he had given to any.

"I'm working pretty hard," he said with an uneasy laugh. "Tell me what I can do more."

"Your work, Phelps, is of a fair grade, but it lacks in grip—in thoroughness. You easily grasp the essential points, but you fail to fill in the details. Your skeleton is all right, if I may use the figure, but you don't cover it well or clothe it. Even some of the

bones are not well articulated. The bones themselves may be as they should, but you want them properly connected and working in harmony. See what I mean?"

"I think I do. My worst fault has always been in sliding over things."

"Half the battle is in knowing the weak spots—and correcting them."

"Thank you, doctor. Honestly your words weren't what I wanted, but I know they're what I needed."

Doctor Brown smiled, but did not respond. His heart went out strongly to this impulsive, warm-souled young junior, and he resolved that he would do his utmost to develop the good traits he possessed in such abundance—at least in promise.

"I came down here, doctor, to ask your advice about two things."

"Yes?"

"The first is about a poem that has been handed me for the 'Lit.' You know I'm one of the editors," he added with a smile. "May I read it to you? I'd like to have your opinion of it."

"Certainly. Read it. I am interested."

"Perhaps you are wise to say that before I begin," laughed Will consciously. "You may not say so when I'm done. But I want your judgment." And Will Phelps began to read, striving meanwhile to appear as unconscious as possible:

"Thou rapid, rounded, rolling orb
Whose beams celestial——"

When the reading was ended he turned eagerly to the professor and said, "What do you think of it, doctor?"

"Why do you ask my opinion, Phelps?"

"Because I want it." Will was so eager that he failed to see the expression of sympathy in the young professor's eyes.

"It doesn't amount to anything, Phelps. It's bombast. The wording is bigger than the thought. Whoever wrote it was thinking more of how he should say it than of what he wanted to say."

"Clothes are important, aren't they?" inquired Will as he turned away his face so that the professor might not see that his cheeks were scarlet.

"Yes, but the man is of more importance than his clothes. Mere clothing you can hang on a clothes-horse or a dummy. That's what this article has done."

"I wrote it, doctor," said Will quickly.

"So I suspected," replied the professor kindly.

"How did you know? What made you think so?"

"Several things."

"And you think it's all stuff?"

"I should not publish it."

"You don't think it's worth anything?" Will's heart was like lead and he was almost inclined to be angry.

"To be frank, Phelps, it reminds me of a 'poem' I myself wrote when I was just about your age. You see it is this way. When we begin to have our eyes

opened there are a good many things we find are wonderful in this world and life of ours—or even this universe, I might say, for you have not limited your thought to such a little insignificant affair as the earth. Naturally we are impressed by what we see and feel, and just as naturally think it is all new. It is new to us, but when we go on a little further we discover to our amazement sometimes that what we thought was so new was as old as humanity and has been much better expressed. If you will read Ossian, for example——"

"I have read him," interrupted Will quickly, "but I don't see what the use is in anybody trying to do anything, then. Somebody else has already done it before him, and as you say much better probably than he can do it."

"Not quite so bad as that, Phelps. Every one has his own life to live and that is always interesting—to him anyway. But I'd put that poem away for a year or two. The world will get over its disappointment in not seeing it, and meanwhile try your hand at some lighter subject. Take something you yourself have experienced or seen or known and that others have not seen. The most commonplace events or experiences of your life will be your best themes—for a while."

Will endeavored to appear convinced, but he was not one who easily gave up, and despite the advice of the man whom he so thoroughly respected he suddenly decided what he would do with his poem. But

he did not explain to Doctor Brown. His heart was somewhat heavy, but striving not to appear cast down by the reception his first request had met, he said, "There's another matter, doctor, I want your advice about."

"What's that?"

"There's a freshman who has become my 'appendage,' my room-mate calls him, because he's always hanging on to me. I like the fellow, but he's the most perplexing problem I've struck yet."

"In what way?"

"There isn't a thing in the way of pranks going on in which he isn't the ringleader. I don't know positively, but I suspect he could explain the ice cream escapade at the time of the president's reception."

The young professor's face clouded slightly, but he did not speak.

"Then he knows a good deal about this 'rig' that has just been worked on the Greek professor."

"What is that? I have not heard of it."

"Why, I thought everybody in college knew of it. It was this way," and Will went on to relate the story of the mob that had besieged the professor for "butter of kine and honey of Hymettus."

When Will had ended his story Doctor Brown threw back his head and laughed long and loudly, while Will himself forgot his own chagrin for a moment as he shared in the young professor's delight.

"The fellow must be repressed, but there's all the more reason for doing something for him. Of course

it was wrong for him to do what he did, but—well, there are some things I can't explain, Phelps. I will say, however, that the professor in Greek reported in the last meeting of the faculty that he was seriously concerned about one of the freshmen. He had not done his work and he feared he was not inclined to do it. Indeed, this fellow—Mott I think his name is——"

"Was it Mott?" inquired Will quickly.

"Yes, I am positive it was," replied Doctor Brown, smiling as he perceived that his own suspicions were confirmed. "But the professor declared that he must have misjudged the fellow, for he came down to his house the other evening and explained that the reason why he was not doing better was because he was suffering from follicular tonsilitis. The professor was quite concerned about it and wanted advice as to whether he himself ought not to write the young man's parents or have him sent at once to the infirmary. I'm giving you secrets of the star chamber, Phelps, but I am confident they will go no further."

"They won't, doctor. But I didn't know Mott had any such trouble as that. He never told me of it."

"Quite likely," said the young professor dryly, "but I don't think you need be alarmed about it. Even the professor was relieved when one of the faculty informed him that follicular tonsilitis was the medical term for hiccoughs and there was a possibility that it had been superinduced by intoxication."

Both Will and the professor laughed heartily, and then the latter said, "Why did you come to me with this, Phelps?"

"Why, you see I didn't know just what to do. I'm interested in the chap a good deal more than I thought I should be; but you see I'm the representative of our class on the committee on the honor system, and I don't know as I have any right to let these things go by."

For a moment the young professor's face was serious and then he said, "Phelps, did you ever hear what was said to be the most impressive fact in the life of Von Moltke?"

"I never did. What was it?"

"It was reported that he could be silent in seven languages."

"You don't think I ought to do anything about it, then?" said Will, a slight feeling of resentment rising in his heart at the implied rebuke.

"Not at all. Not at all. On the contrary, there is the greater reason for you to do more. But the special task of the committee is to act upon cases referred to it, is it not?"

"Yes, sir."

"You are not to look up cases?"

"No, sir."

"Then for the present at least let the faculty look after it. Of course, after your interview I shall not feel at liberty to refer to the matter. Is there anything with Mott worse than what you have told me?"

"I don't know. Sometimes I'm afraid there is."

"Don't speak of it even to him until you are certain. But the very fact that he is drawn to you as he is, is the best of reasons why you should do your best for him."

"I don't know just what to do."

"Keep on and you will soon find out. And don't hesitate to let me know if I can be of the slightest assistance."

Will departed at the hint, and going directly to the post office secured a large envelope in which he placed the poem on the "rapid, rolling, rounded orb," and enclosing stamps, directed the missive to the editor of the "Mogul Magazine" in New York City.

CHAPTER XV

THE FRESHMAN'S WARNING

IT WOULD have been difficult for Will Phelps to explain even to himself why he had sent the poem to one of the leading magazines and directly against the best judgment of those in whose words he had the greatest confidence. Perhaps it was sheer bravado, and yet so convinced was the junior of the excellence of his production that as he walked rapidly back to his rooms he was picturing the scene when he should be able to show Foster and Miller and perhaps even Doctor Brown himself the little note of acceptance from the editors which, somehow, he felt convinced must come. To himself the resonant words were full of meaning and it was difficult for him to understand how any one who read them should not be impressed in a similar manner. The young professor's suggestive but somewhat brutal figure of hanging clothing on a clothes-horse recurred to him and caused a momentary pang of resentment, but it only served to deepen his purpose. If the "Mogul Magazine" should by any chance reject the poem he would simply send it on to other editors. He had heard that it was extremely difficult for a new and unknown writer to obtain a fair hearing from editors who were already prejudiced in favor of certain

writers, and naturally, and by virtue of that very fact, not favorably inclined to estimate at their true worth the writings of other men. But somewhere there must be a man who would carefully read and duly appreciate the merit of the poem. Perhaps it might be the editor of the "Mogul" himself.

There was comfort in the thought, and Will had recovered somewhat from the resentment he had felt during his interview with Doctor Brown—an interview which had terminated somewhat differently from his expectations. He was singing in his most cheerful tones when he entered the room. His room-mate was bending over his desk and evidently hard at work.

"Hello, Foster!" shouted Will. "What's up?"

"I'm afraid nothing is up till I turn it up. Things never turn up for me, somehow, no matter how long I wait for them. I have to do the 'turning up' myself." Foster laughed as he spoke, but his earnestness was not to be concealed from his friend.

"What are you doing?" demanded Will.

"Trying to find an idea or two for the debate. You're going in for that, aren't you?"

"You mean the preliminary debate—the trials for the Alden affair?"

"Yes."

"Time enough for that yet," laughed Will. "Yes, I'm going in for it, but the question was only announced this morning."

"I know it, but this is the time to begin to prepare to get ready."

"Let me see—the question is on the election of United States Senators by popular vote, isn't it?"

"That's what it is. I gave in my name this morning, and Professor Morton has already assigned me to the affirmative." This professor to whom Foster referred was the head of the department of English in Winthrop, and by virtue of that fact was in charge of the preparations for the debate. "You'd better see him to-day, Will, and put in your name."

"I'll see him, all right. I see him too much, anyway. He's the most pompous little bantam on the faculty. Did you ever see a man strut as he does when he mounts the platform to take his seat before the class?"

"He's unique," acknowledged Foster with a laugh, "but just the same he has charge of this affair and you'll have to see him if you go in."

"I'll see him. I'm strong for this debate. Why! we must beat out Alden! There'll be a crowd here for the football game, and probably the most of them will be on hand the night before to hear this debate. I tell you, Foster, it's an opportunity, and you and I must make the most of it."

"It is an opportunity, just as you say, Will," replied his room-mate soberly, "but if I recollect aright the old Romans are said to have believed that the lady by that name wasn't troubled with any superabundance of back hair."

"Oh, I'll grab her by her bangs! Never you fear!" laughed Will.

Foster made no further reply, but turned at once to his desk and resumed his task. And nearly a week passed before Will Phelps handed in his name for the preliminary debate and was assigned to the negative side of the question.

"You are a trifle late, Phelps," Professor Morton had suggested. "In fact, yours is the last name to be entered. You will have to do some hard work. There are to be four teams, with three on each side, in these preliminary trials."

"And only three are to be chosen?"

"Yes, three, with one substitute or alternate. I wish you success, Mr. Phelps."

"Thank you," responded Will as he departed from the room.

His mind was engrossed now with his purpose of preparation for the coming trials. He was eager to be selected as one of the three debaters to represent Winthrop. That he had more than a chance to be selected he firmly believed, for by common consent he was acknowledged to be one of the best speakers in his class, and of his literary ability he himself, as we know, had no slight opinion. Filled with enthusiasm, he returned to his room, eager to begin his preparation, and his face expressed his irritation when he opened the door and discovered Mott seated in one of the easy-chairs.

"Hello, freshman! Make yourself at home," he said shortly.

"Thank you. I'm trying to, Mr. Phelps."

"You'll have to excuse me, freshman. I've got some work to do."

"Don't let me interfere, Mr. Phelps. I'll sit here and see how you do it."

Will laughed as he replied, "It may do you good. From what I hear you are not growing round-shouldered under the weight of the burden you're carrying. By the way, Mott, I hear you have not been well."

"Who said so?"

"That doesn't matter. How's the follicular tonsilitis?"

"It's better, Mr. Phelps. I seem to have attacks of it only when I'm in Splinter's room. Did he tell you about it?"

"You'll have something worse than that if you don't mend your ways."

"What's that?"

"An attack by the faculty. They're seriously thinking of sending you to the infirmary for two or three weeks."

"Honestly?" Mott's face, which had been expressionless, suddenly changed, and there was no question as to his interest. He sat quickly erect and gazed at the junior in a manner that caused Will to become serious also.

"I mean what I say. Your name has been up before the faculty."

"I'll do better, Mr. Phelps. I will, honestly. I mean just what I say."

"It isn't too late, but you'll have to begin right away."

"I'll begin to-day. I'll begin now. Got a Greek lexicon, Mr. Phelps?"

"Yes," responded Will as he threw the book at his visitor. "Now see if you can keep quiet, Mott. I've got to go to work."

For a few minutes there was silence in the room, but it was soon broken in upon by the freshman.

"I say, Mr. Phelps."

"Well, what is it?" demanded Will impatiently.

"We're going to have a house party."

"Who is?"

"The Alphas." This was the fraternity of which Mott was a member.

"When?"

"Three days. The girls will come up the day before the football game with Alden and stay over Sunday."

"Then they'll be here on the night of the debate?"

"Sure."

Again there was silence in the room, but it had not lasted long before Mott again broke in upon it.

"Mr. Phelps."

"Yes?"

"There's a girl coming up to the house party that I want you to meet."

"Yes."

"Will you do it?"

"Delighted."

"She's a sort of a half-way cousin of mine. I've written her about you."

"That's good of you, freshman," laughed Will, swinging about on his chair. The action evidently pleased Mott, for he said eagerly, "She's a daisy, Mr. Phelps."

"Being a cousin of yours, how could she help being?"

"That's all right. But she is, and you'll say so too when you see her."

"What's her name?"

"Stone. Virginia Stone."

"Any relation to Rhode Island granite or Vermont marble?"

"You won't talk that way when you see her."

"Probably not."

"She's got one fault, though, Mr. Phelps."

"Only one? She's a lucky girl."

"Only one real one. She's superstitious."

"Everybody is, more or less. Even my mother won't sit down at a table where there are thirteen—"

"I shouldn't think she'd mind that if there are thirteen there already. She'd make the fourteenth, wouldn't she?"

"Yes," laughed Will, "I suppose she would. What's this Miss Stone superstitious about?"

"She goes to a fortune-teller."

"So do a good many others, just for fun."

"It isn't that way with her. She goes for business."

"Does it do her any good?"

"Lots."

"Then you musn't blame her," laughed Will.

"I'm not blaming her, I'm just warning you."

"Thank you, Mott."

"You needn't laugh, Mr. Phelps. When you see her you'll be just as bad as a hundred others have been. She'll lead you on, and then she'll go to consult her fortune-tellers. It may be all day with you then."

Will laughed at the seriousness of the young freshman and said, "Does she have regular fortune-tellers to whom she goes?"

"Always."

"Where are they?"

"In New York."

"Fakes?"

"Not a bit of it. Everybody has heard of them."

"Who are they?"

"Dun and Bradstreet."

Will threw back his head and laughed loudly. "Freshman, you beat anything that ever came to Winthrop."

"But aren't they good fortune-tellers, Mr. Phelps? I've always heard they were, and I know Virginia goes to them a good deal to look up her friends."

"They certainly are the best in the world."

"Well, you can't say I haven't warned you, can you, Mr. Phelps?" said Mott as he rose to depart.

"No. You've been above-board in everything

except that you told me you wanted me to meet her. It doesn't seem quite fair to have me do that after what you've just said."

"Oh, yes, it does! Yes, it does, Mr. Phelps," said Mott eagerly. "She knows all about you. She knows you're president of your class and she's heard all about that poem of yours too on the 'rapid, rounded, rolling orb.'"

"She has!" exclaimed Will aghast, his cheeks flushing violently. "Where in the world did she—did you, I mean—hear about that?"

"Everybody has heard about it, Mr. Phelps. It's great! I can say it by heart. Want to hear me?" And Mott began—

> "Thou rapid, rolling, rounded orb,
> Whose beams celestial——"

"Here! Hold on, Mott! Tell me where you got that?"

"I can't quite say," said the freshman slowly and as if he was striving to recall the occasion when he had first heard the sonorous words.

"Tell me, Mott!" pleaded Will, who was seriously disturbed.

"I would if I could, Mr. Phelps. Honestly I would, but I don't know."

"You must."

"I'll do my best. I've got a copy of it in my room and I'll look it up and see if I can tell. Good-bye, Mr. Phelps."

Will nodded, but did not rise from his chair. He was perplexed and chagrined by what the freshman had said. Did the whole college know of his poem? It was useless, he assured himself, to attempt to do more work on the debate just then, and seizing his cap he started for the post office. When he received the letter, which he perceived was in the box, his heart was beating wildly, for in one corner of the envelope were the words, "Editors—The Mogul Magazine."

CHAPTER XVI

THE PRELIMINARY DEBATE

AS WILL PHELPS departed from the post office he came face to face with Doctor Brown. He hastily thrust the bulky envelope into his pocket and with almost a guilty expression on his face returned the salutation of the professor and hastened from the place. It seemed to him that every one must be aware of the turmoil in his soul, and he turned aside into one of the more quiet streets of the little village.

When he was satisfied that no one was near he drew forth the envelope and with trembling hands tore it open. The manuscript of his poem was before him, just as it had been when he had mailed it, but enclosed was a letter which he read twice through with bated breath. It was a printed and regular form, but Will was too inexperienced in such matters to understand that, and his feelings were not unmixed when he read that the failure to accept the enclosed manuscript did not imply "that it was lacking in merit. The pressure upon the columns of the 'Mogul Magazine' and the number of articles that already had been accepted and were delayed in publication, owing to the lack of space, rendered it inexpedient to use the contribution which he had so kindly sub-

mitted to them. It had been read with interest and if in the future he should have anything to submit to them it would receive their most careful consideration."

The flattering words were like balm to Will's feelings, and in his delight he said aloud, "There! I guess Miller and Foster won't be quite so quick to say it's a freshman's poem next time." It was true that in spite of the glowing words of the letter the manuscript had been returned to him, but the bitterness of the fact was in part gone, because of the letter itself. It was too bad that their columns were so crowded, he thought as he walked slowly back to his rooms, but the implied praise of the poem indicated that it might be "available" in the columns of some other magazine. Had he not heard that Thackeray had submitted the manuscript of "Vanity Fair" to nineteen publishers before the book was finally issued? He was positive that he had heard of such a report. And what a marvelous success the book had received when it made its bow to a waiting world. Instantly he resolved to send his poem to the editors of the "Eastchester Review." This magazine was every month on the table in his fraternity house and its pages were eagerly perused by the students. Already he could picture to himself the attitude he would assume when the surprise of his fellows became manifest in their discovery of a poem by him—by Will Phelps, junior in Winthrop. And he would take a copy to Doctor Brown himself when the issue appeared. His eyes

flashed as he thought of the pleasure that would be his when he should, with a carefully studied air of indifference, call the young professor's attention to his poem in the "Review."

Elated now, and even his feeling of disappointment in a measure gone, Will ran swiftly to the house, bounded up the stairway to his room and was delighted to discover when he entered that his roommate was not there. He quickly seated himself at his desk and drew open the drawer where his stationery was kept. He selected a large envelope, placed the manuscript within it and then addressed it to the editors of the "Eastchester Review."

Suddenly it occurred to him that it might be well to enclose stamps for a possible return of the poem, but he was so convinced that the enclosure would be unnecessary that it seemed almost like a waste to do so. Still it might be well to conform to the universal custom, and he hastily drew forth another drawer in which his stamps were kept.

"That's strange," he muttered when he was unable to discover any. "I know I left a dozen there last night, for I bought them right after dinner." A further search failed to reveal the presence of the missing stamps, and then he suddenly opened a pocketbook which he also kept in the drawer with his stamps. An exclamation of dismay escaped his lips when he discovered that the purse was empty.

"I left seven dollars in that pocketbook last night, I know I did," he said to himself. "It's all gone,

though, and the stamps are gone too! I don't like the look of this." For a time he sat motionless in his chair while he recalled the similar loss that had come to Miller. It was strange. Will slowly recalled those who had been in the room since the preceding night. Try as he might he was not able to shake off the thought of Mott. The freshman had told him that he had unexpectedly received ten dollars at the very time when Miller had missed that sum from his desk. Then too, Mott had been in the room when Will had returned and there was no means of knowing what liberties he might have taken in the absence of Foster and himself. And yet it was well-nigh impossible to connect Mott's name with the loss. The freshman was troublesome, there was no question as to that, but Will found it almost impossible to connect his name with the disappearance of the money he had left in his desk. And yet the junior was seriously troubled. For a time he sat in silence thinking over the matter, and then at last with a heavy sigh he arose and went down to the post office again and dispatched his poem to the editors of the well-known magazine.

It was impossible, or so he imagined, to take up his work once more immediately after such exciting experiences, and so he turned toward North Hall to seek out Miller. His classmate was not in his room, but Will seated himself, and finding a copy of the "Eastchester Review" on Miller's table, at once took it, and seating himself comfortably in an easy-chair began to read. And there was a trace of self-satisfac-

tion manifest on his face too, for the prospect of seeing his own name in print on the pages of this very magazine had a marvelously comforting effect on the mind of the junior.

When an hour had elapsed and still Miller did not return, Will at last arose and departed, but still found himself, as he fancied, unable to settle down to any serious task. Other classmates were visited and the day was gone before he was hardly aware of its passing.

When he returned to his own room he found Foster busily engaged in his preparation for the coming preliminary debates.

"Come ahead, Will; let's thresh this stuff out together. You are on one side and I am on the other. It'll be good practice for us," suggested Foster.

"That's a good scheme, but I think I'll not try it on now."

"Come ahead, Will," pleaded Foster.

"I'll do it all right, Foster, but I'll not be able to now. I've got some other things I must do first."

Foster said no more and Will busied himself at his desk. He did not undervalue the suggestion of his friend, but in his own heart he was so confident of being selected as one of the debaters that he did not feel inclined to waste any time in undue preparation. Everybody in college, as he fondly believed, accorded him a place on the team, and he firmly believed the inspiration of the occasion itself would arouse him and be a source of help such as it would to but few of

his competitors, and as for the others, Will in his heart affected to despise their attempts.

On the night of the debate, however, he became sharply aware of his lack of preparation. The trials were to be held on the evening preceding the debate with Alden, a most unusual procedure and one which Will could not understand. He protested vigorously to Foster, who laughingly replied that "he was not to blame for the change in the programme" and suggested that Will might do well to see Doctor Brown, who was to be one of the judges.

"I didn't know he was to be a judge," said Will quickly.

"His name has been posted for three days."

"Who are the others?"

"Splinter, and a lawyer from Boston."

"I ought to dig out a lot of history to-night, but I'll have to let it go and do what I can on this debate. Got your points all ready, Foster?"

"They are as ready as I can make them. Will, they say a good many of the visitors are here now. They've come up in time to take in the trials as well as the debate and the game."

"So I hear," replied Will, who was already at work.

A few minutes only had passed when there was a rap on the door, and in response to the order to "come in," Mott entered the room.

"Oh, it's you, is it, freshman?" laughed Will. "Well, you must sit down and be a good little boy. I'm busy now."

"Mr. Phelps, Miss Stone is here."

"Where is she?"

"Down at our house. I told her I'd come up and get you."

"Sorry I can't go."

"But you must, Mr. Phelps. She's waiting there now."

"That's too bad."

"She won't believe me. Come down yourself and tell her you can't come."

"Did she bring her Bradstreet with her?"

"I don't know. Please come, Mr. Phelps. You don't have to stay. You can come right back, and there will be time enough then for your work."

Will hesitated a moment, and then, disregarding Foster's unspoken appeal, said lightly, "All right, freshman! It's the easiest way to get rid of you. I'll be back in five minutes, Foster!" he added lightly as he quickly donned the proper garments and set forth with the freshman.

The evening was gone when Will returned to his room and Foster was already in bed. For a time Will endeavored to busy himself in the work which he knew was necessary, but his eyes were heavy and at last he rose from the desk and said to himself, "I'll have to get up early in the morning and do it. I can do three hours' work in one any day before breakfast. But on the following morning he was awakened by the voice of Foster saying, "Going to chapel, Will? You've got three minutes."

"What time is it?" demanded Will as he leaped from the bed.

"Seventeen minutes past eight. Three minutes to chapel."

It was impossible to dress properly in the time, and Will hastily drew on some of his garments and donned a sweater, which he partly covered by an overcoat as he made a wild rush for the chapel. He was able to enter just as the doors were being closed, and when he took his seat he was aware that many visitors were there, among whom he perceived Miss Stone, his new acquaintance of the preceding evening.

When the exercises were ended he made a wild rush with his classmates for the door, striving to avoid the eyes of the young lady, although he was convinced that she had recognized him and was ready to give him a friendly nod. The day had not begun well, and when it ended, Will was ready to declare that even inanimate objects were capable of conspiring against him. But he was on time when the debate was called and was also aware that a goodly number had assembled to hear it. This time when he perceived Miss Stone in the audience he went over and spoke to her, and when he took his place at the table and the proceedings began, something of his old-time confidence and fervor had returned, and any one who saw him would have agreed in the conclusion. Manly, alert, eager, he seemed the very embodiment of youthful vigor and force.

When the debate itself began he listened attentively

to Foster's words and to the replies, and was somewhat impressed by the force of his room-mate's arguments. At last his own turn arrived, and rising and addressing the judges and audience, he at once began.

"I shall not attempt to enter into an extended or elaborate argument at this time." (There was a smile on the faces of some of his hearers as Will referred to this time as if he was confident that in the other time —that of the debate with Alden—he would be free to elaborate his points.) The affirmative has everything to prove, and it rests with you to say whether or not my opponents have succeeded in doing so. Not to prove their points is to leave the decision with the negative. And that is what we are here for." A smile ran through the audience at Will's easy-going assumption, and it was evident that the sympathy of many was with him.

"Briefly stated, my points are these:

"First—The election of Senators should be left as it is for the sake of the people themselves. We believe in popular government. We believe in the words of the immortal martyred President in a government of the people, by the people, and for the people. But there are times when the people need to be saved from themselves. The demagogue arrives, and under the spell of his glowing oratory the mob, the people, the mass is ofttimes swept from its moorings. In the choice of Representatives the voice of the people is supreme. In the choice of Senators, though the people are not ignored, they are nevertheless saved from

themselves. They stand—those noble State legislatures of ours—as a barrier between the despotism of a tyrant and the tyranny of a despotic people. They represent and at the same time present. They follow, yet they guide. They obey, yet they rule. They are our servants, and at the same time are our rulers."

CHAPTER XVII

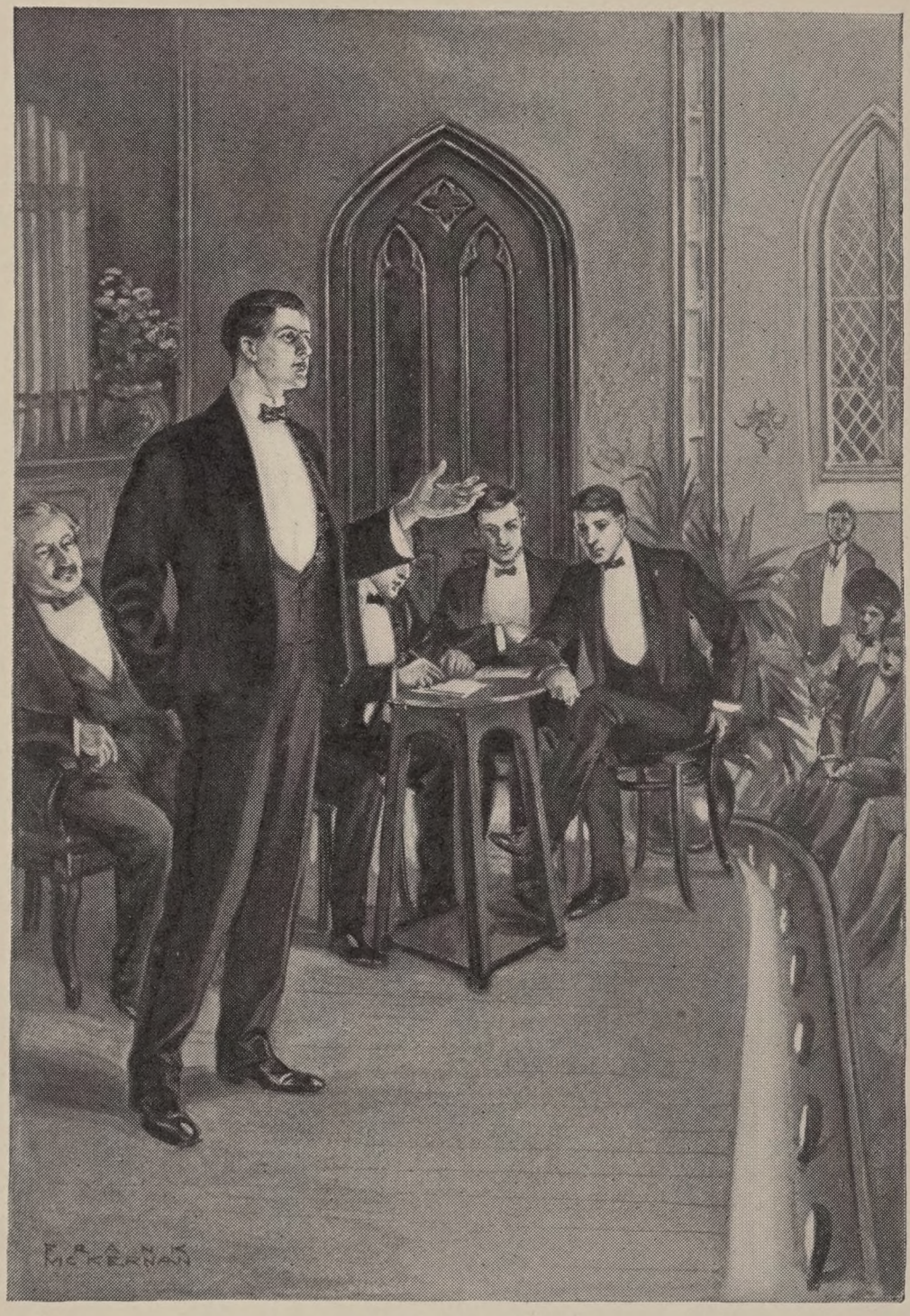
THE AWARD

THE response and evident interest of his audience were having a very marked effect upon the young debater and his eyes were glowing. As he turned about to look at the assembly he could see Miss Stone and young Mott, who were seated in the body of the assembly, and the expression on the freshman's face was different from anything he had ever seen there. Pride, interest, satisfaction were all commingled, and as Mott turned and whispered to his companion Will could see that she nodded assent to what was said, and it was evident that she too shared in the feelings of her young friend.

There was a ring of confidence in Will's voice as he resumed. "I think it was a great English divine who once said, 'I pity a priest-ridden people, but I pity much more a people-ridden priest.' If I may be permitted to paraphrase the expression, I would say I pity a ruler-ridden people, but I pity far more a people-ridden ruler. Pilate stands as the supreme example. A trimmer not a guardian, a follower not a leader, a servant not a master. He might wash his hands in the presence of the assembly, but the blood of the innocent was more upon his head than upon the heads of the fanatical, howling mob in whose

power the Roman ruler stood on that memorable day in the history of the world. It is the same principle I would here and now apply. I would not belittle one whit, even if it were in my power to do so, the voice of the people, which sometimes, but not always, is the voice of God. If majorities are always right, then the howling Jewish mob must have been right when Barabbas received their unanimous approval. If the minority is wrong, then Paul was wrong, then Luther was wrong, then John Adams and George Washington were wrong, then the meek and lowly Nazarene was wrong. The simple truth is, as we all must admit, that there are times when the zeal of the populace must be checked, when the people must be led, not followed, and one of the great points in the plans of our noble forefathers in providing for the election and selection of the best men for the Senate of these United States of America, was to provide for this very thing. And our worthy opponents have not advanced anything but the most specious of arguments and the most shallow of pleas for a change in a custom that has the sanction of more than a century and has thereby been established upon a firm foundation."

Will's voice, always one of his most valuable possessions, was penetrating and resonant, and the deep conviction with which he spoke brought a ripple of applause from the audience, but it was quickly suppressed by the presiding officer. "My second point," he continued after a brief and effective pause, "is this—the present method of election provides for a



"'My second point,' he continued after a brief and effective pause, 'is this.'"
Page 168.

recognition of the sovereignty of every State in the Union. We are a nation—for which fact let us never cease to be duly grateful to the Supreme Ruler of all nations. We are becoming more and more with every passing year a nation of one people. From the North, from the South, from the East, from the West there comes one word greater than the expression I am a Northern man or I am a Southern man, and that is, I am an American. This is the greatest rallying cry of the people of this great nation. But duly acknowledging, as I gladly do, the sovereign will of this great people, I nevertheless cannot deny that we are a union of States. The individual man is the great personal unit, but the individual State is also to be reckoned with. I hear the voice of Webster, of Clay, of Washington, but I would not conceal the voice of Massachusetts, of Pennsylvania, of the prairie State of the West, or the cotton-covered fields of Georgia. To recognize one is not to deny or belittle the other. True national spirit is not to be found in either alone, but in both united. Now this fact was recognized by the men who framed our Constitution and launched the ship of state upon the tempestuous waves. Only our opponents, prejudiced and unable, I fear, to appreciate the breadth of the vision which every man, woman, and child in this audience sees when the first dawning light of intelligence sparkles in their eyes, are there to stand against this great and self-evident truth. Now it was due to this self-evident truth that the election of Senators was provided——"

At this time the presiding officer arose, and striking his gavel on the stand said, "Every speaker was to be limited to ten minutes. The time, therefore, has expired."

"But—but," stammered Will, "I have four other points. I haven't touched on them yet."

The officer smiled and again struck his gavel on the stand and Phelps abruptly took his seat. He was aroused and excited, and as he glanced about the audience the smiles of approval that greeted him convinced him that he had at least produced the impression he had most desired. For him the interest in the debate itself was mostly gone, and it was with a well-satisfied air that he awaited the decision of the judges.

When at last Doctor Brown arose to declare the selection of the debaters for the contest with Alden, Will glanced smilingly at Mott and Miss Stone, and the decided nod of the freshman caused him to laugh and turn again to hear what Doctor Brown was saying. Even then only a part of the young professor's words were heard, but he was listening intently when the three selected names were announced.

"Mr. Bennett, Mr. Simons, and Mr. Clark."

A deep flush spread over Will's face, and he glanced down upon the floor. So deep was his feeling of resentment that he could not force himself to glance at Mott or Miss Stone. He had not even been mentioned as an alternate, and his feeling of mortification and chagrin was intense.

Hastily realizing that it would never do to make a

display of his own feelings, he compelled himself to rise, and turning about, reached forth his hand to Foster. The expression of deep sympathy on his room-mate's face was almost as hard for Will to bear as his own disappointment, but his words were not lacking in cordiality as he said:

"It's all right, old man. I'm glad you're chosen, anyway."

"It's too bad, Will. It's a shame. There wasn't a speaker that held the audience as you did."

"The audience, perhaps, but not the judges."

"It's all the same."

"Not quite. It doesn't seem to be, anyway."

"But I felt sure Doctor Brown would vote for you, Will."

"He didn't, and that's all there is to say, Foster."

Despite his own suffering Will congratulated the successful debaters and then turned for the more difficult ordeal of meeting his own friends. If he had been free to follow his own desires he would have fled from the building and sought relief in the woods or in the quiet of his room. But to attempt that now would be to acknowledge his defeat openly, and that was something he must avoid at all hazards. He tried to laugh indifferently when he listened to the indignation of Mott, which found expression in his words of contempt for Splinter and the other two judges. It was a trying ordeal for the junior, but as soon as he was able to do so he excused himself, declining the urgent invitation of Mott to go with him and Miss

Stone to the "spread," and in a little while was in his room and alone with Foster.

His friend was too considerate of his feelings to refer again to the award, and it was Will himself who first spoke of it.

"I've tried to look at it from every side, and, honestly, Foster, I can't understand it. Can you?"

"I thought you would be chosen, Will," replied Foster quietly.

"So did I, and I don't mean to be conceited either. And think of Clark being one of the elect. Why, the fellow hasn't anything but bombast and pomposity. He roars like the bull of Bashan."

"He had some good points in his debate."

"I confess I didn't hear them. I don't believe he got them himself."

"Perhaps not. I don't know anything about that."

"Oh, well, it was hard luck. But there isn't any use in crying over it. The milk has been spilled."

"You'll make it all right next time."

"I don't think there'll be any 'next' time for me. What's the use? I don't believe Splinter would vote for me if I was the angel Gabriel."

"Very likely," laughed Foster, but he said no more.

The feeling of resentment in part was gone on the following morning, though Will had passed a restless night. His vanity was suffering keenly and he assured himself that there must have been some cause outside the debate itself that had led to his rejection. But what it was he was not able to conjecture.

The warm words of his friends when the students departed from the chapel, many of whom declared that the action of the judges had been most unjust, were sweet to him and in a measure were soothing, but when Doctor Brown greeted him quietly Will somewhat coldly acknowledged the salutation. The young professor had seemed to be his friend and his action was consequently doubly strange.

It was only by an act of his will that Will Phelps forced himself to attend the debate between the two rival colleges. It was mortifying to be compelled to sit among the spectators, but he endeavored to appear at his ease, though somehow it seemed to him that his effort was a failure and that all the assembly must be aware of his disgrace, for it was in some such light that the young junior was looking upon his failure. Still, he joined in the applause that was given the speakers, and when at last the decision was awarded to the Winthrop trio he cheered lustily with the rest of the college.

To his room-mate that evening he expressed his firm conviction that it was only Foster's arguments that had won for Winthrop, and that Clark's pomposity was a subject for the caricaturists.

Foster laughed as he replied, "Will, have you seen Doctor Brown?"

"No."

"Why don't you go down to see him?"

"What for? To ask him why he didn't select me? I'd make a fine show of myself, wouldn't I?"

"I think you'd feel better if you did."

"I feel all right now. I wasn't the only fellow that was left out, was I?"

"No. But you know a good many of the fellows think you ought to have been on the team."

"Well, I'd rather have them feel that way and not be on it than to be on it and have them feel as they did about Clark."

"That's all right too. But, honestly, I'd go down to see Doctor Brown. You might find out some things that would help you."

"Excuse me," laughed Will.

Foster did not explain that he himself had met Doctor Brown after the debate and in his zeal for his friend and room-mate had asked the young professor why Will had not been selected for the team. But as he did not refer to what was said Will consequently knew nothing of the meeting or the interview.

On the following afternoon, agreeable to his promise, Will went to the house where Miss Stone was staying, to take her to Lewis field, where the football contest between Winthrop and Alden was to take place. He had purchased a Winthrop banner, which Miss Stone carried in her hands, and the Winthrop colors were much in evidence about the young lady's garb. Her interest and enthusiasm were contagious, and Will's "grouch," as she laughingly termed his feeling of depression, was forgotten when they took the seats on the grand stand which Will had previously secured.

The scene before them was of itself one to stir the blood of a man much less responsive than was Will Phelps. The Alden team was already on the field when he arrived, and in their preliminary work the enthusiasm of the Alden contingent that filled the bleachers on one side of Lewis field continually broke forth.

"They sing well, don't they?" demanded Miss Stone enthusiastically.

"Oh, they sing all right. You just wait till our team comes and you'll hear something worth hearing. There they come now!" he added excitedly as the squad of thirty brawny young collegians came trotting down the field.

Unmindful for the moment of his companion, he leaped to his feet and was shouting with the supporters of the Winthrop team, who old and young seemed to have lost control of themselves. Banners were waving, hats were tossed into the air, and a cheer "like the sound of many waters" rose from the great assembly.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE GAME WITH ALDEN

WHEN the shouting and singing died away sufficiently to permit Will to speak to his companion he turned to her, his face glowing and his enthusiasm for the time banishing every other feeling from his heart.

"It'll be a great game, Miss Stone; a hard fight."

"What makes them fight so, Mr. Phelps? I have seen two games and the way they fight is perfectly dreadful."

"They aren't really fighting," laughed Will. "It looks worse from the side lines than it does from the gridiron."

"Oh, does it?" remarked the young lady, the blank expression upon her face betraying her complete ignorance of the meaning of the words Will had employed.

"Do you know the points of the game, Miss Stone?" inquired Will, his eyes turned toward the players in their preliminary practice.

"Yes, I think I do. I'm sure I do," she replied glibly. "As I said, I have only seen two games, and they were perfectly splendid, though I did not understand it all as I do now. My young cousin explained it all to me this morning."

"Did he?" responded Will somewhat absently.

"Yes, indeed, he did. And now I understand it perfectly. He told me there was a quarter-back, a half-back, a full-back, a way-back and a touch-back. You'll point them out to me when the game begins, won't you?"

"I'll do my best," Will replied with a smile. He was thinking of Mott and the "explanations" he must have given this girl. But Mott had gone to the cheering section and was safe.

"How perfectly lovely of you, Mr. Phelps. But then I don't think I shall have to trouble you very much, for Alfred made it all so plain to me that I am sure I understand it now."

"'Alfred'?"

"Yes. Alfred Mott."

"Oh, yes. I had forgotten," murmured Will.

"Yes, he explained it all. He is a little dear, Alfred is, though he is the most mischievous boy in the world."

"Is he?"

"Indeed he is, but no one would ever suspect it he is so demure. If one is on his guard it's all right, but unless he is Alfred will be likely to make trouble for him before he is done with him. It was lovely of him to tell me all about the game. He said it would be much more pleasant for you if he gave me the 'points' before the game started."

"That was kind of him."

"Indeed it was. I'm ashamed to say it, Mr.

Phelps, but I never really knew until this morning what a touchdown was."

"So? That was a daisy!" Will's mind was drawn from the words of his companion by an unusual punt by Hamley. At one time the huge player had been a member of Will's class, but "circumstances over which he had had no control" had induced him to drop to the class below, as he himself had expressed it.

"Yes, now I understand just what a touchdown is," continued Miss Stone. "I had seen a great many of them, but I never knew just what they were till Alfred explained it this morning."

"Yes," murmured Will absently.

"I don't see why they think they must touch him so hard, though?"

"Touch what?"

"Why, the man who is the touchdown. Alfred told me to watch the fellow with the ball, and he said that when he had been thrown down then all the men on both sides tried to come up and touch him. That was why he was called the 'touchdown.' But I think it's perfectly dreadful when they run and throw themselves right on him, and just as hard as they can too! And sometimes they throw him down so hard, but I understand now why they do it, though I didn't till Alfred explained it to me."

"Oh, he explained it to you, did he?" murmured Will.

"Indeed he did, but I don't think even if the man is the touchdown they ought to be so ungentlemanly

"'Yes, now I understand just what a touchdown is,' continued Miss Stone."

Page 178.

with him, do you, Mr. Phelps? They might touch him without being so rough about it. I don't wonder some people think football is a brutal game."

"It depends."

"When is it they run with the goal, Mr. Phelps?"

"When is it they do what?"

"Run with the goal. Alfred said they took turns in doing that."

"Alfred is a—great boy." Will at first had been indignant at the impish freshman for "guying" his own cousin, as evidently he had, but the remark he was about to make was left unsaid.

"But when do they run with it?" persisted the young lady.

"I'll tell you when they do," said Will dryly.

"Thank you, Mr. Phelps! Thank you! I'm so glad that I shall not be a trouble to you to-day. My brother Tom says that a girl who doesn't know the points of a game is the worst thing that can happen to the man who takes her. My brother Tom has almost stopped taking his lady friends."

"But he takes you, doesn't he?"

"Sometimes, but not so often as he used to. I think he'll be more willing now that I have learned so much about the game. I wouldn't bother him the way some of the girls do for all the world. Do you know I never even knew what the interference was till Alfred explained it to me, though of course I have heard of it a thousand times. Do you think there will be very much interference in this game, Mr. Phelps?"

"There ought to be. Ours is our strongest point."

The girl appeared for a moment to be slightly confused and then said, "But I shouldn't think you would want him to interfere, Mr. Phelps."

"Want whom to interfere?"

"Why, the umpire, of course. Alfred explained just how it was. He said every time the umpire stopped the game it interfered with it and the fellows never liked it. He said they were all down on it."

"Yes. Yes. Of course." Will repressed his tendency to laugh and turned his face away to see the formations that were being made.

"There is one thing I still do not understand, Mr. Phelps."

"You are very fortunate."

"Oh, you know I don't mean that. I mean there is one point in the game which Alfred did not explain to me, or I forgot to ask him. I can't tell just which."

"What was the point, Miss Stone?"

"I'll tell you. You see I want to find out everything before the game begins, and then I can follow everything right along with you. Why is it that every once in a little while the men jump up and all run and stand right in a long line across the field? And they do it when there is no reason for it at all. All at once both sides will drop everything and stand right up in line in front of each other and act just as if they were as mad as they could be. What makes them do so, Mr. Phelps?"

"Why—why, that's lining up."

"Oh, how stupid of me! Of course,! Of course it is, and I never thought of it! Why, of course, yes, certainly."

"They're off now!" shouted Will as the whistle sounded, and both teams stood tense and ready for the signal. The entire assembly had risen and the songs and shouts were redoubled. The banners and flags were waved until the entire place seemed to be a blaze of color. Then a silence had followed, the whistle's shrill note was heard and the game was begun.

"What makes them all take off their perspirationers, Mr. Phelps?" inquired Miss Stone.

"Their what?"

"Their sweaters," replied the girl with a slight blush.

"They take them off because—because they don't want them on." Will's voice was husky and he was intensely excited, for Bonnett had broken through the Alden line and tackled the man who had received the ball on the kick-off before he had returned it three yards.

"Thank you, Mr. Phelps," said Miss Stone sweetly, but Will did not hear her words, for on the first line-up Bonnett had again broken through the dazed Alden team, and before he was stopped he had crossed the line and a touchdown had been scored by Winthrop. Such extraordinary "luck" had never before been known in the history of the contests between the two colleges and the enthusiasm for a time threatened to break all bounds. Old men threw their arms around

the necks of men as old as themselves, hats were in the air, hands, banners, flags were waved and the noisy demonstrations of the Winthrop crowd were only balanced by the death-like silence that rested over the seats where the Alden supporters were.

"The game is young yet," remarked Will sagely as he and Miss Stone resumed their seats and the two teams prepared to renew the struggle.

"Is an old game better than a young game?" inquired Miss Stone simply.

"Sometimes. Yes, I think it is," added Will with a sigh.

There was a silence for a brief time as the teams struggled, neither side being able to advance the ball and both refusing to punt as the ball changed hands, so fierce was the contest at this stage.

"Who was that touchdown, Mr. Phelps?"

Will under the excitement of the game was tempted to ignore the question or explain the mistake his companion had made.

There was no escape, however, for in a moment Miss Stone again said, "Who was that touchdown, Mr. Phelps? He looks somehow familiar to me."

"Bonnett made it."

"Oh."

Again there was silence for a time, so tense was the interest of the spectators, but Miss Stone was not to be entirely repressed. "What a pity that Bonnett who is in your class, can't play, isn't it, Mr. Phelps? Alfred says he's one of the best players in Winthrop.

I think his aunt was very unreasonable, don't you, Mr. Phelps?"

"I do."

"Who took his place?"

Will made no response, and to his inexpressible relief Miss Stone herself said quickly, "Oh, yes, I remember now. Alfred said that a gentleman named Hodges had taken Bonnett's place on the team. You say this touchdown's name was Bonnett too."

"No—yes—his name—you can see it on your score card there. 'Left half-back, Hodges.'"

"Yes, I see. I see it now. Why do they think Mr. Hodges must be left?"

"He isn't 'left.'"

"But you said he was. You certainly did, Mr. Phelps."

"Why, yes. To be sure. So I did. Go it, Bonnett!" he suddenly shouted, leaping to his feet as the fleet-footed half-back made a gain of twenty yards, only to be thrown hard by the watchful Alden full-back.

"He's a touchdown again! I think this game is perfectly splendid, Mr. Phelps, only I do wish they wouldn't touch him so hard when he is down there on the ground. It doesn't seem quite fair, does it? There they go again!" she exclaimed delightedly. "Is this Bonnett any relation to the Bonnett I know?" she inquired.

"Certainly—that is—yes—I don't know the Bonnett you know, you see," said Will in some confusion.

As the game progressed he was sometimes dimly aware that the girl by his side was making comments or asking questions, to which he replied in a perfunctory way. He had no thought of neglecting her or failing in his courtesy as a gentleman, but the excitement was too keen to permit him to turn his eyes often away from the struggling athletes on the field.

When at last the game was ended and the only score that had been made was the touchdown of Bonnett's in the first five minutes of play, the surging crowd carried the triumphant Winthrop team from the field on the shoulders of their admirers. Will was as enthusiastic as any, but when at last he and Miss Stone departed from Lewis field, the reaction had come. Winthrop had won a victory both in the debate and in football, and he had not had a share in either. Somehow it was depressing to the impulsive young junior, and it was only by an effort of his will that he forced himself to listen to Miss Stone's enthusiasm over the game. As soon as he had left her at the house in which she was a guest, he started rapidly down the street, a sudden impulse having mastered him and caused him to decide not to return to his room until he had acted upon the impression he had received.

CHAPTER XIX

A POINTED INTERVIEW

WHEN Will Phelps stopped it was before the house in which Doctor Brown was living. His thoughts were in a turmoil, and even then he was tempted to turn back and avoid an interview which he had repeatedly declared he would never seek. And yet the junior's depression was so strong that he thought it would even be a relief to hear the candid words of the young professor, for Will knew that Doctor Brown would not say anything in which he did not firmly believe. To have the students of Winthrop shouting enthusiastically over two victories the college had won and yet to feel that he himself had been left out was an experience to Will so new and novel that as yet he had not been able to adjust himself to the changed conditions. Even in his school days he had been a natural leader and had accepted the position as his almost as by his own right. In college a similar experience had befallen him in spite of his severe struggle in his freshman year,[1] and now to be left out of the recognition of his comrades was a most bitter trial. Not that Will Phelps was unduly fond of himself or inclined to measure himself falsely by his own standards, for, indeed, it had been

[1] See "Winning His 'W.'"

his boast that he had made it a rule to be honest with himself, or at least he fancied that he was honest; but the present experience was one that seemed to him strange if not unexplainable. He assured himself again and again that in the trial debate he had held his audience and stated his points forcefully, and his own convictions had been strengthened by the words of his friends. He had suddenly determined when he had left Miss Stone that he would go to Doctor Brown at once and ask him why it was that he had been rejected in the selection of the Winthrop debaters. The apparent egotism of the question might safely be ignored, he assured himself repeatedly, for the young professor would have grounds to suppose that he had come for any other purpose than to receive some good advice.

When he was seated, however, in Doctor Brown's study, he discovered that the task was much more difficult than he had fancied it would be. He had responded to the quiet and cordial greeting he received, and for a time the conversation turned upon the success of Winthrop in the two contests, and the enthusiasm of the young professor somehow seemed to grate upon Will's feelings as he sat facing him.

At last a measure of courage returned and he said quietly, "Doctor, I came down to-night on purpose to ask you a question."

"Yes?"

"I'd like to know why it was I was thrown out of the debate. Of course, I don't mean to imply that the

decision was wrong or that I think I ought to have been one of the men chosen; but I should like very much to have you tell me just what you think was wrong."

There was an expression of tenderness in Doctor Brown's face as he quietly watched the junior while he was speaking, but Will was not aware of it, for his own face had been cast down as he spoke.

"Do you think you should have been selected, Phelps?" inquired Doctor Brown quietly.

"Perhaps I'm not the best judge, doctor," responded Will, laughing a trifle uneasily. "Probably every fellow in the debate thought, if the decision had been left to him, that he ought to have made the team."

"That may be so, though I am inclined to question it. I wish you would answer my question, Phelps."

"I certainly hoped I would be," replied Will more confidently.

"Did you base your hopes on your debating?"

"Why, of course. I think I held the audience as well as any one did, and to me it seemed as if my points were good."

"You did hold the audience the best of any one who spoke. If the decision had been left to the audience, there is no question that you would have been first on the list."

"It's good of you to say so, doctor," said Will, his face flushing with pleasure at the welcome words of praise.

"But, as I said, the decision was left to the judges, not to the assembly. Now, Phelps, can you think of any reasons for the judges' action?"

"Probably they knew better."

"Probably they did. But what was it that made them go against the very evident popular feeling for you?"

"I can't say."

"Do you mean that?"

"Why, yes, I suppose I do. I didn't have time to finish what I had to say," Will added, a trifle uneasy under the earnest gaze of his friend.

"Exactly."

"Do you think that was what shut me out?" inquired Will, eager to find something that might soothe his own troubled feelings.

"Before I answer, let me ask a question. Why did you not finish in the time given you? You knew what the time limit was to be, didn't you?"

"Yes, sir. I knew. But somehow the time got away from me before I knew it."

The young professor smiled as he said, "We are getting on. Now perhaps you will explain why you did not prepare your debate so that you would conform to what you knew must be a fixed rule."

"I couldn't just measure the time, doctor."

"Is that the real reason?"

"I think so."

"Think again then, Phelps," said Doctor Brown, shaking his head as he spoke.

"I don't know any other reason. Honestly, I don't, doctor."

"Did you write out your argument, Phelps?"

"No, sir."

"Why not?"

"I intended to, but somehow I didn't find the time."

"Didn't find the time, or didn't take it?"

"Both," laughed Will, though he was again slightly uneasy under the professor's gaze.

"No, not 'both'; only one. Which one, Phelps?"

"Perhaps if I had sat up nights——"

"The real reason, then, was that you did not prepare yourself?"

"Weren't my arguments good, doctor?"

"Excellent; but how many points did you make, Phelps?"

"Why, only two," said Will in some confusion. "I had five others——"

"But you only made two in the time allotted?"

"Yes, sir. But if they had allowed me to go on——"

"Which was just what they did not do. Now, Phelps, suppose you had been one of the judges. Suppose you had made all due allowance for forceful presentation, diction, ease of manner, and the other various elements in public speaking, and then had carefully taken the points presented by one speaker and against them had weighed the points presented by his opponent. Suppose one speaker had quite

fluently, perhaps forcefully, presented two points and his opponent had replied to the two and then presented five of his own to weigh against them, and these five had not even been touched upon by the first speaker, to which of the two men do you think you would give the award?"

"I see what you mean, Doctor Brown," said Will in a low voice.

"And you did not see before?"

"I didn't think of it before."

"You know now that you ought to have thought of it?" inquired the professor kindly.

"Yes, sir."

"Now, Phelps, I voted for you. I don't mind telling you now, but I don't expect you to refer to it."

"You did?" said Will delightedly.

"Yes—and almost against my better judgment. There is no question and there was none concerning your ability. It was a question of arguments presented. In spite of your lameness in that particular I voted for you, because I still believed you might best represent the college. But I had only one vote and there were two against it, and in my heart I believe the other two judges were more nearly correct. Certainly the result of the debate with Alden indicated they were not far wrong, anyway."

"Yes, sir."

"Phelps, you have asked me to reply to a question, and I have done so. May I go on and say one thing more which you have not asked for—which perhaps

you may not want to hear, though I know you need to hear it?"

"Yes, sir." Will's voice was low and his cheeks were scarlet.

"It is just this, Phelps. You are a fellow of promise, but whether or not you will fulfill the promise is a serious question—a very serious one. I heard of a man once who was always referred to by his friends as a most promising man. In fact, he promised more and did less than any one they knew."

"Why, Doctor Brown!" protested Will, somewhat indignantly. "I think my word is——"

"I am not speaking of what you think, but of what I know. The world is abundantly supplied with just such men. They are bright, they have clear minds, they are magnetic, perhaps, and forceful; but they never do more than give promise, for the promises are never fulfilled. They will not work, and I care not how quick or bright a man may be, if he will not work, failure is already spelled in capital letters for him. Now take the matter of your work in history. You have naturally a good mind for the study. You can look beneath the surface and are quick to grasp the salient points, but you do not master the details. Such mastery implies drudgery, and that is a price that thus far you have failed to pay, though it is the price of success in any line. You showed your lack very plainly in your debate. Naturally, you were as good —almost as good as the best. But you simply had not prepared yourself—and failed. There is no other

word for it. Flatly, you failed. Now whether or not you are still to go on doing that with your life I cannot say."

"Lots of fellows do well after they leave college," suggested Will feebly.

"By which you mean to infer or imply that they did not do well in college?"

"Yes, sir. Some of the high-stand men in college never amount to anything when they get out into the world."

"I am not talking about bookish men or high-stand men. I am talking about the men who fail because they are not ready for the opportunity when it comes. That means preparation, and preparation means drudgery. To meet it successfully there is something inborn in some men, developed in others, but in them it must be or they become flat failures."

For a time there was silence in the room. Will was suffering keenly, for the professor's words, though they had been spoken in a tone that showed the kindness in the man's heart, were nevertheless different from any he had ever heard before. His mother had always assured him that what he did was right, and unconsciously Will had accepted her teachings as true. His pride was stung and he was hurt by the words of this man as almost never before he had been in his life.

"Is what I have been saying true, Phelps?"

"I haven't any doubt you think it is."

"But you do not?"

Will made no response, and Doctor Brown said, "Phelps, did you ever hear that the reason why some prize-fighters win is due as much to the fact that they can 'stand punishment' as to the force of their own blows?"

"Yes, sir."

"It's true of other men than prize-fighters. The manner in which one can 'stand punishment' is very often a test of his strength. I am not sorry I have spoken. I—and you too—ought to be sorry that it was necessary to speak. I am interested in you more than you can understand, Phelps." The young professor's voice was low and his deep feeling was apparent in his tones. "I believe in you. I am sure you will meet this problem. Our professor of chemistry was telling me the other day that he had been employed by the Board of Health of a certain city to analyze the city's water supply. He did so and found it polluted. What do you suppose followed? The Board of Health was indignant at him and discharged him at once. They will find some other chemist who will be more subservient and will say what they want him to say, for it seems that some of these health officials were stockholders in the water company."

"I see what you mean, Doctor Brown," said Will, rising as he spoke.

"Come and see me again."

"Thank you, I will." Will spoke quietly and at once departed.

His feeling of anger was not gone, though he

acknowledged to himself that the professor's words were not entirely devoid of truth. He was still thinking of them when he entered the post office and received the letter in his box, a letter which he quickly perceived was from the editors of the "Eastchester Review." Instantly he tore open the envelope and perceived that his manuscript had been returned, and as he read the letter (a printed letter) that had been enclosed, he again was informed that the "failure to accept his poem was not due to any lack of merit, but the pressure upon the columns of the magazine, the lack of space," etc., etc.

Angrily Will thrust the letter into his pocket and departed from the post office, convinced that all the world was conspiring together against him.

CHAPTER XX

MORE LOSSES

THE feelings of the young junior were in nowise relieved when he entered his room and instantly perceived that Foster also was in trouble of some kind. He was too preoccupied with his own keen disappointment and chagrin to give much heed to his room-mate's evident distress, and he flung himself moodily into an easy-chair and glared at a spot on the wall, from which he did not turn away his eyes for several minutes.

"Will," said Foster, at last breaking in upon the awkward silence, "I'm right up against it. I don't know what to do."

"Same here. I guess we all have our troubles."

"What's the matter?"

"Oh, nothing."

"I thought you'd lost your best friend instead of having lost what I have."

"What have you lost?" said Will, without looking at his room-mate.

"My watch."

"Your what?" Will sat quickly erect now and stared at Foster.

"My watch."

"Where did you lose it?"

"I can't say. If I knew that, I might be able to tell the rest of the story. I only know where I left it."

"Where was that?"

"In the top drawer of my desk."

"Sure?"

"Yes," said Foster quickly. "I took it out of my vest when I put on my sweater this afternoon, and I put it right in this drawer." As Foster spoke he placed his hand on the drawer in question, which was still open.

"Might have slipped under some of the papers. Have you looked?" Will quickly arose and began himself to search in the open drawer.

"No use, Will," said Foster quietly, though he did not offer to assist his friend. "I've had every piece of paper out and gone through everything."

"It certainly isn't there," Will said at last, as he abandoned the search and turned about facing his room-mate. "You're sure you didn't leave it in some other place?"

"I know I didn't. I remember putting it right there."

"Your name was in it, wasn't it, Foster?"

"No. But I have the number of the works and the case too."

"That's good. We may find it. It's strange," Will muttered, then looking up he said quickly, "Have you any suspicions, old man?"

"None that I want to speak of."

"Did I tell you I lost some money the other day?"

"'I took it out of my vest when I put on my sweater this afternoon.'"

Page 196.

"No. Did you?"

"Yes, I did, and good money too. You remember that Miller told us of his having lost some, don't you?"

"Yes."

"There's something wrong here."

"Evidently."

"Was anybody here when you left the room?"

"No, not then," replied Foster hesitatingly.

"There's been somebody here, though, and you know who it was, Foster," said Will decidedly. "Tell me about it."

"There isn't much to say."

"Tell me what there is."

"Why—there was somebody here when I came back," Foster said at last, "but I don't like to speak of it. Probably he doesn't know anything about it."

"Who was it?"

Foster hesitated a moment and then said, "Your *protégé*."

"Mott?"

"Yes."

Will was silent for a moment, and the expression of his face betrayed how seriously he was troubled. "Did you speak to him about it?" he said at last.

"No. I didn't miss it till after he was gone."

"Did he act guilty?"

"Not so far as I could see. Of course, I was not thinking of it while he was here. I don't believe he would take it. Do you, Will?"

"No—that is—I don't want to—I don't know. Suspect any one else?"

"No, I don't think I do."

"What are you going to do about it?"

"I can't say. I haven't decided yet. What would you do?"

"It's a pretty serious matter. You might talk it over with the dean."

"I might, but I'm not ready yet. Better keep our eyes open and our mouths shut for a time. I have thought of one little scheme, though I don't believe it will amount to much."

"What's that?"

"Writing the police in some of the towns and telling them to keep an eye on the pawnshops and look out for the numbers. Lucky I kept both the number of the case and the works too."

"That's not a bad scheme. It may find its way there sooner or later. And I'll write to New York too. That's the center of gravity for all such things."

"Let's do it now!" said Will impulsively. "You write a half-dozen letters and I'll do the same."

"All right," responded Foster, and for a time both boys were writing busily. When the letter-writing was completed, Will, who had enclosed his poem in another letter which he had directed to the editors of the "National Magazine" and included it in the pile he had written the police of various neighboring cities, arose and said, "Let me have your epistles, Foster. I'll go right down and mail them now."

"I'll take them, Will. You've done enough."

"I'm going down anyway. Got to go."

"All right, then," and Foster handed his roommate the letters which he had written.

For the time Will's own feeling of depression had been forgotten in the trouble of his friend, but it returned in a measure as he walked down the street, and when he arrived at the post office he was once more pitying himself for the sufferings which the mass of ills that had unjustly fallen upon him had produced.

His feelings were not relieved when he discovered Mott just departing from the post office as he himself entered. The sight of the freshman somehow was irritating, for at the moment he was the last man he wished to see. The freshman, however, was apparently in good spirits, for he hailed the upper-classman loudly. "Hello, Mr. Phelps! I was up in your room. I wanted to see you."

"So I heard," replied Will dryly, as he deposited his mail.

"Did you? Well, you didn't hear what I came for."

"No."

"Miss Stone is going to stay over."

"Is she?"

"You don't seem to be very profoundly impressed, Mr. Phelps."

"Look here, Mott," said Will almost fiercely, "that was a scurvy trick you served her."

"I serve her a scurvy trick? I don't know what you mean, Mr. Phelps." Mott's voice was low and his manner instantly became that of injured innocence.

"Yes, you do know. You pretended to explain to her the points of the football game with Alden. You told her the men ran with the goal, that a touchdown was the fellow who fell with the ball, and that when he was down every man had to touch him, and I don't know what else, of such stuff. I never had such a time in my life."

"Why, Mr. Phelps," protested Mott meekly, "I didn't do anything of the kind. She wanted me to give her the points and I did it. I did it just as well as I knew how. But no one ever saw a girl that could learn them, no matter how many times you went over it with her."

"That will do, Mott. You know what you did, and so do I."

"Well, I didn't do very much. The most of it was hers. Honestly, Mr. Phelps."

As Will did not reply Mott said, "I want to tell you something. And I want it to be strictly *de novo*."

"Strictly what?"

"In strict confidence. Just between ourselves. Just *de novo*."

"You mean *inter nos*, then, don't you?"

"Well, that'll do as well as any other. I've no business to quote Latin. But in plain English, you won't speak of what I'm going to say. Will you?"

It was impossible for Will to determine whether the freshman was speaking seriously or not, but he gave the desired promise, and Mott said, "You know I owe you five dollars, Mr. Phelps."

"Is that what you don't want me to speak of?" laughed Will.

"Not exactly. I had some money from home to-day and I put a five-dollar bill in the upper drawer in my desk. I left it there so that I wouldn't spend it and it would be safe for you, Mr. Phelps. Well, when I came back from the game the money was gone. So now I can't pay you, that is, I can't pay you now, Mr. Phelps; but I'll have some more money from home in a few days and I'll pay you then. I'm sorry I can't do it now."

For a moment Will did not speak. The similarity between Mott's loss and that of Foster, the fact that he himself and Miller had also lost money, and that all the losses were very similar, was at least a coincidence. He looked keenly at his companion as they passed a street-light, but it was too dark to enable him to see the expression on Mott's face. Perplexed and distressed, Will at last said:

"You take your loss very quietly, Mott."

"What's the use? It's gone, isn't it?"

"It certainly seems to be. What are you going to do about it?"

"There isn't anything I can do, is there, Mr. Phelps? Of course, I sha'n't leave any more money around loose like that. I'll invest it just as soon as I

get it. If it's got to go, I'd rather be the chap through whose hands it slips than to give the other fellow the chance. Wouldn't you, Mr. Phelps?"

Ignoring the question, Will said, "Have you heard of any other fellows losing any money—or anything?"

"No, I can't say that I have," replied Mott slowly, as if he was thinking seriously of the question. "Why, yes, I have too," he suddenly added. "I heard Splinter say to-day he had lost something."

"Splinter? What had he lost?"

"He complained to the class that he had lost the bloom of his youth. I don't know what that is, do you, Mr. Phelps?"

Somehow the flippancy of the freshman irritated Will as it never had done before and he said almost savagely, "Drop it, freshman! Answer my question."

"I haven't heard of anybody," responded Mott meekly.

"Not any one?"

"Not a soul. Has somebody else lost something, Mr. Phelps?"

"You may hear more about it later. What time is it, Mott?" he suddenly demanded, as they stopped underneath a street-light.

"Ten o'clock, Mr. Phelps," replied Mott, as he drew forth his watch.

"That's a good watch, isn't it?" inquired Will, as he stretched forth his hand. "Let me see it."

"It's a good watch for a dollar," laughed Mott. "My father says he won't get me a better one till I deserve it."

"Wise man. Good night," Will added abruptly, as he turned away.

"Hold on a minute, Mr. Phelps!" called the freshman quickly. "I haven't told you the most important thing yet. It was what I came to see you about."

"Tell me to-morrow. I haven't any time now," replied Will brusquely, as he left the freshman and began to walk rapidly up the street.

Foster was already in bed when Will entered his room, and it was not long before he followed his room-mate's example. It was a long time, however, before he was asleep. The day had been a depressing one, and now that he was alone Will's own troubles came back to him with redoubled force. Even the perplexing freshman and Foster's loss were ignored as he recalled the interview with Doctor Brown. Anger, chagrin, mortification swept over him by turns. He had been treated unfairly and unjustly. What right had the young professor to talk to him as he had? His pride was stung and his self-esteem had suffered a rude shock. Gloomy and dispirited, he rolled and tossed till the bell in the chapel tower rang out the hour of one, and then at last Will sank into a deep sleep.

The sun was shining bright and strong when he awoke on the following morning, and he discovered that he had barely time in which to dress and eat his

breakfast before the service in the college chapel would be held. Hurriedly he prepared, and when he was about to enter the chapel he was accosted by Mott, who evidently had been awaiting his coming. Impatiently he turned upon the freshman, but in a moment he was intensely interested in what Mott was saying.

CHAPTER XXI

A DESERTED HOUSE

"MISS STONE wants to see you at the close of the service," said Mott hurriedly.

"All right. Is she here?"

"Yes. She is sitting with the families of the faculty."

"I'll find her, then. Come on, freshman!"

Both students passed into the building just in time to prevent the doors being closed upon them, and in a somewhat undignified manner hastened to their respective seats. A hush fell over the assembly, for, in spite of the prevailing contrary opinion, the innate reverence of a body of college students, when their interest is held, is one of their most marked characteristics.

At the close of the service Will stopped in the pe in front of the one in which Miss Stone was seated, and as he returned her greeting he said, "Mott told me you had a confession to make."

"Not exactly a confession," replied Miss Stone with a smile. "It is more in the nature of a request. I am to go home on Tuesday, and to-morrow a trip up South Mountain has been planned. It's to be in the afternoon, so it won't interfere with your recitations, will it, Mr. Phelps?"

"Not in the least."

"Can you join us, then? We want to see the view from the top. At first I thought it would be too cold, but that may make it all the better for the walking. There are to be nine of us, and I wanted you to go so that I might explain to you how dreadfully that young Mott deceived me."

"About what?"

"About the game with Alden. He told me the most dreadful tales about the points of the game, and I was so foolish that I believed him, and then, worst of all, I tried to show you how much I knew. You must have been highly entertained, Mr. Phelps," she added in some confusion.

"Don't let that trouble you, Miss Stone," laughed Will. "We saw the game, anyway, and not even Mott's coaching could prevent us from winning."

"Yes, and I never was so glad about anything," she said eagerly. "Then you will join us, Mr. Phelps?"

"Most certainly, and with all the gratitude in the world."

"That's good of you."

As they passed out from the chapel Will still continued by the young lady's side and accompanied her to the house in which she was staying. There he left her, and, promising again to be promptly on hand for the expedition of the morrow, he walked rapidly back to his own rooms.

In spite of the brightness of the day his feeling of depression returned in a measure when he seated him-

self in his easy-chair. He was alone, and there was no one to break in upon his thoughts, which were by no means pleasing. He resented the words of Doctor Brown more even than he had when first he had heard them. The young professor had taken too much upon himself. What right had he to say such things when he had not asked for his opinion? And yet Will could not conceal from himself the fact that in a measure he had drawn the words the professor had spoken. Had he not gone to him for the very purpose of asking his opinion? And had he not given it? To be sure, it was not exactly what Will had expected. But, honestly, whose fault was that? Doctor Brown certainly had not volunteered any advice. And was it possible that what he had said was true? Will compelled himself to face the question heroically, and he was obliged to acknowledge that the words had hurt most of all because in his heart he knew they rested upon a substantial basis of truth. Did he not trust more to his quickness and readiness than he did to thorough, honest work? Doubtless it would have been much more pleasing to hear the young professor praise him, but he was old enough and wise enough to avoid being "coddled." And yet was not that the very thing he was seeking? Doctor Brown's words as to the ability of prize-fighters to "stand punishment" came back to him. He smiled as he thought of the figure which the refined and cultured instructor had used to emphasize his point. And yet was it not true? The man who fled at the first hard blow, the one who

gave up and cried because of the first hurt he received, was a baby. The race of life was not for infants in arms, but for men strong enough to endure to the end. He had been playing the baby act. Probably he had needed, even if he had not wanted, the very suggestion Doctor Brown had made to him. He thought too of the manner of his teacher when he had been speaking to him, and his heart softened in a moment. Various epithets, such as "chump," "fluke," "quitter," came to his mind, and he accused himself of being guilty of all. Seizing his hat he darted from the room, determined to seek Doctor Brown and acknowledge at once the debt he owed him. He would show him that his good words had not been spoken in vain, and that even if he was no prize-fighter he could stand up under "punishment" like a man.

Under the force of the reaction that was now upon him in full force, and as eager now to show that he was determined to profit by the words of the young professor, he almost ran to the boarding place of Doctor Brown. He was keenly disappointed when he was informed that the professor was out of town and would not return until the following day. The spirit of his newly formed resolution, however, was still strong upon him as he hastened to his fraternity house, and his elation was so great throughout the day that his room-mate inquired as to its cause.

Will laughed in response to Foster's query, but he evaded a direct reply. On the following day, at the appointed hour, Will was promptly on hand for the

proposed expedition to the summit of South Mountain, as the highest of the adjacent hills was named. It was a laughing, somewhat boisterous group of young people, accompanied by the father and mother of one of the students, that began the ascent. There was a rough roadway that, like a scar, could be seen on the mountain-side, and up this the merry party proceeded.

Will and Miss Stone were in the rear of the party, and soon were so busily engaged in their conversation that they were hardly aware of the fact that they had been dropping behind the others.

"Yes," Miss Stone was saying, for the conversation had turned upon the subject of young Mott, "he is your most devoted admirer. He will sing your praises world without end if one will only listen."

"Which it would be difficult to find any one to do," laughed Will.

"Very likely," replied the girl demurely. "But then I think you have a great responsibility, Mr. Phelps, and you can't escape it," she added soberly.

"Some are born with responsibilities resting upon them, some achieve them, and some have them thrust upon them."

"I am deeply interested in him," continued Miss Stone. "You know he is my cousin and my favorite too. His mother died when he was a baby, and his father ever since has not appeared to care very much what became of his boys. And there is so much that is good in Alfred. I'm glad he is such a friend of yours."

Will was by no means so enthusiastic as his companion, for, though he had laughed at the drollery of the freshman in question, the recent troubles were perplexing. He was, of course, aware of Mott's feeling toward him, but he had attributed it very largely to the natural regard which many a freshman had for the members of the upper classes.

"Do you know how much money he has to spend?" he inquired.

"A good deal. Too much altogether. Why do you ask?"

"Oh—because I wanted to know."

"That's a woman's reason."

"And mine too."

"Tell me, is he careless, is he reckless?"

"He gets into every scrape he can find, but——" Will hesitated as he thought of the recent "losses" that had occurred.

"But what?" demanded the girl.

"Is he honest?"

"Perfectly. He is mischievous and always has been, but I don't believe he ever told a lie in all his life. Why do you ask?"

"Oh, it's well to know," said Will lamely. "If one has to be responsible for another you know he ought to know something about the make-up of his man. Not that I'm willing to say I'm responsible for him," he hastily added.

Miss Stone at once launched upon the portrayal of her young cousin's character, and somehow Will

came to share in her enthusiasm as she told of the freshman's life. He never had had a sister, but he had made a confidant of Miss Stone. And she told of the temptations, the air of indifference with which he had been surrounded, how he had at last decided to enter college, what his letters to her had contained, and, above all, his deep-seated admiration for Will Phelps. Upon this last she had built many hopes, and Will somehow felt guilty as he listened to her glowing words. He silently resolved that he would do more for Mott than he had been doing, even if it should lead to some disagreeable results in the matter of the "losses." The boy appeared in a new light and was certainly in need of help.

"Oh, Mr. Phelps!" said Miss Stone suddenly. "See that delightful old well-sweep! I have seen pictures of them, but I never saw a real one—I almost said a live one—before. Perhaps the old oaken bucket is there too!" As she spoke she pointed toward the ruins of an old house near which still stood a sturdy though somewhat decaying post with a long "sweep" fitted upon it—one end in the air and the other resting upon the ground. The house itself was crumbling, and the air of desertion was so forlorn as almost to be pathetic in its appeal.

The girl had in her enthusiasm turned aside from the roadway and was running lightly toward the deserted house. They were two-thirds of the distance up the hillside, Will could perceive, and the other members of the party could no longer be seen. He

hesitated a moment and then quickly followed Miss Stone.

"Such a sight almost seems to me human," Miss Stone said as he rejoined her. "Just think of what the walls of that house must have seen. When the people first built it, all this region must have been a wilderness. Perhaps the Indians came here and frightened the young wife with their savage looks. Who knows how many times she stood in that very doorway and waited for her husband to come home? Maybe the children played around this very spot where we are standing, and they now are all dead, or grown old and gone. Perhaps the 'good man of the house' died in that very room there," and she pointed, as she spoke, to the broken windows overgrown with tangled vines. "Oh, what a story the old place could tell if it only had a voice!"

Will was thinking seriously of what the eager-hearted girl was saying. Here was the very material for which he was looking for his next poem or article. "If you will help me I'll try to tell it," he said quickly. "I'll write it up for the next 'Lit.,' and who knows what may come of it."

"Oh, do, Mr. Phelps! I wonder no one ever thought of it before."

"I'm glad they didn't. You don't care if I follow up your suggestion?" he inquired.

"'My' suggestion? Why, it's yours, Mr. Phelps. I never thought of it. But I'm sure it will be interesting. I've heard of your literary ability. Why, do you

know, Alfred has committed some of your poems to memory. There's one that begins:

"Thou rapid, rolling, rounded orb,
Whose beams celestial——"

"There! That will do!" laughed Will. "I don't know where the freshman got that, but if I had known he was spouting my——"

"I must see that dear old well-sweep!" broke in the girl eagerly. Her enthusiasm was contagious, and Will, who had seen this very spot a dozen times since he had entered Winthrop, turned with a new interest to watch the enthusiastic girl as she moved swiftly toward the sweep.

He was still thinking of the possible poem in the walls of the forsaken house, and hardly heard her words as she called, "Come here, Mr. Phelps. This is the best of all. There are poems everywhere——"

Her words ended in a piercing shriek and suddenly she disappeared from sight. Horrified, Will Phelps bounded toward the spot, and even while he ran he could perceive what had befallen his companion. The old well had in all probability been covered, and the grass had grown over the decaying boards till the very spot was concealed from sight. Without a suspicion, Miss Stone had stepped upon the covering and the grass had given way beneath her weight and she had fallen into the depths of the well. The one piercing cry was all that he had heard, but the silence that followed was even more agonizing. It seemed to him

that his feet were held back by heavy weights as he leaped toward the spot, but in a moment he had gained the place, and throwing himself upon the ground, peered over the edge into the black depths of the well, which he instantly perceived was deep and dark.

CHAPTER XXII

AN ADVENTURE

A FAINT glimmer from the water far below him was all that Will Phelps at first was able to see.

A horrible fear that his companion might have been killed swept over him as he gazed into the deep darkness of the well.

"Miss Stone! Miss Stone!" he shouted.

"Here I am," came back a feeble response.

Will could see the indistinct outlines of her form as she spoke. About ten feet below the ground she was clinging to the roots of the great maple tree that grew near and had twined and intertwined about the sides of the well.

"Are you hurt?" he called in his excitement.

"I don't know," she replied. "I'm hanging onto these roots, but I'm afraid I can't do it much longer. Hurry! Be quick or I shall fall."

A shudder passed over Will as he heard the despairing call, and, shouting to her, he said, as he leaped to his feet, "Hang on! Hang on, Miss Stone! I'll get help in a minute!"

The excited fellow dashed about the old house, searching for a pole, a rope, anything that might serve as an aid to his companion in her plight. He broke open the door, but there was nothing he could use to

be found within the empty walls. He darted into the woods, he ran to the crumbling barn, but still he was not able to find anything to aid him in his efforts. It almost seemed as if the ruins had conspired to baffle him in his desire to rescue his companion. Almost in despair he turned and ran swiftly back to the road, but not one of his companions could be seen.

"Help! Help!" he shouted again and again, but his voice sounded strangely hoarse and feeble in his own ears. "Help! Help! Come back here!" he called again and again, and then, as still no answering call could be heard, he placed a finger in his mouth and whistled shrilly a half-dozen times. Again he sent forth his agonizing call for help, and then, trembling and fearful that Miss Stone might have been unable to maintain her hold on the interlacing roots, he darted with all speed back to the well.

"Are you there?" he called hoarsely, as once more he flung himself on the ground and peered over the edge into the depths below.

"Yes," came back the response.

Intensely relieved, Will again leaped to his feet, shouting as he did so, "Hold on a little longer, Miss Stone! Keep up your heart! I'll get something to help now!"

Darting into the nearby woods, he frantically began to search among the trees for a branch which he might cut and use. As nearly as he had been able to estimate the distance, he thought Miss Stone must be about ten feet down in the well. If he could only find

a branch that would serve his purpose! Again it seemed to him for the moment that there must be a conspiracy even among the trees of the woods against him. Branches too large or too small for his purpose were to be seen in abundance, but it was almost impossible to find one that he could use.

Soon, when he had in his confusion and eagerness darted almost helplessly from tree to tree, his eyes were turned upon one long branch of a spreading beech that might be made available. Instantly drawing forth his pocket-knife he began to cut vigorously. In his excitement the blade slipped and the blood trickled from his finger, but he was unmindful of pain and even the bleeding itself. He cut with savage strokes, but the wood was tough and his knife was small, and his progress was slow, painfully slow, as it seemed to him in his over-excitement.

At last, after what seemed almost an endless time, he was able to tear the branch from its place, and instantly he began to strip the leaves and smaller limbs and twigs from their place as he ran swiftly back toward the place where he had left his companion.

He had left a projecting smaller branch near the end of the limb where he had cut it from the tree, which formed a crotch, and as he glanced at it, it flashed into his mind that it might serve as a foot-hold for the imperilled girl, and then if she could manage to grasp firmly the limb itself at the same time, he might be able to draw her up. But was the limb or

pole long enough to serve such a purpose? A great fear fell upon him as he glanced again at it that it would be too short. He dropped it upon the ground as once more he peered over the edge.

"All right, Miss Stone?" he called breathlessly.

"Yes," was the trembling reply. "But I can't hold on much longer."

"Oh, yes, you can," he called, striving to keep up her courage. "I'll try to help you out now. I've got a limb of a tree here, and I'm going to lower it to you. Put your foot in the crotch at the end, and then grip the limb with your hands, and I will draw you up."

"I'm afraid! I'm afraid you'll drop me," moaned the terrified girl.

"No, I won't. It's strong enough to hold you! I'll pull you up before you know it! Now, then, here it comes."

Will stood up and quickly lowered the branch till he could see that it was beside the place where the girl was clinging. It was long enough to reach her, and one source of fear at least was gone. "Don't be afraid! Be careful, and take plenty of time. I'm braced here and there is no fear of your falling. Put your foot in the crotch first and then take firm hold. Now, then!"

Miss Stone carefully obeyed his instructions and did not utter another word. A thrill of admiration passed through him as he watched her, and for a moment even his alarm was gone. When, however,

her full weight was upon the limb he realized what a task was before him. His feet were firmly braced and he was pulling upon the heavy weight. The difficulty was increased because he was not able to pull straight up, for he was leaning over the open well. The cruel gleam of the water, at least forty feet below, seemed murderous and waiting for its victim. The weight too, seemed to increase with every inch. The perspiration stood out in drops upon his forehead as he strained and lifted. His hands were torn and bleeding, but steadily the girl came upward. He dared not lift too rapidly, lest his hold might slip. It seemed to him that he could hear voices in the distance, but he must not reply, for a shout from him might startle the girl and cause her to loosen her grasp. His face was purple, and it seemed to him that his arms were starting from their sockets, so fearful was the strain. And yet carefully and steadily he lifted, and slowly and surely Miss Stone was rising to the surface.

Suddenly there was a rush of feet about him and he was dimly conscious that other hands were also upon the limb. Not a word was spoken, but in a brief time he was aware that the girl's arms were grasped; and as he staggered backward he could see that she had fainted. She was placed upon some sweaters which the students had hastily taken off and arranged.

"She's fainted. She'll be all right in a minute," Mott said to Phelps, as he went toward her.

Will vaguely wondered how the freshman chanced

to be there, but he made no inquiries, and in a brief time he could see that Miss Stone had revived.

She was still weak, however, and the sight of her colorless face smote Will as if he had been himself guilty of some fault.

"We'll have a carriage here just as soon as Baldwin can get one at Winthrop," said Mott. "It won't be long."

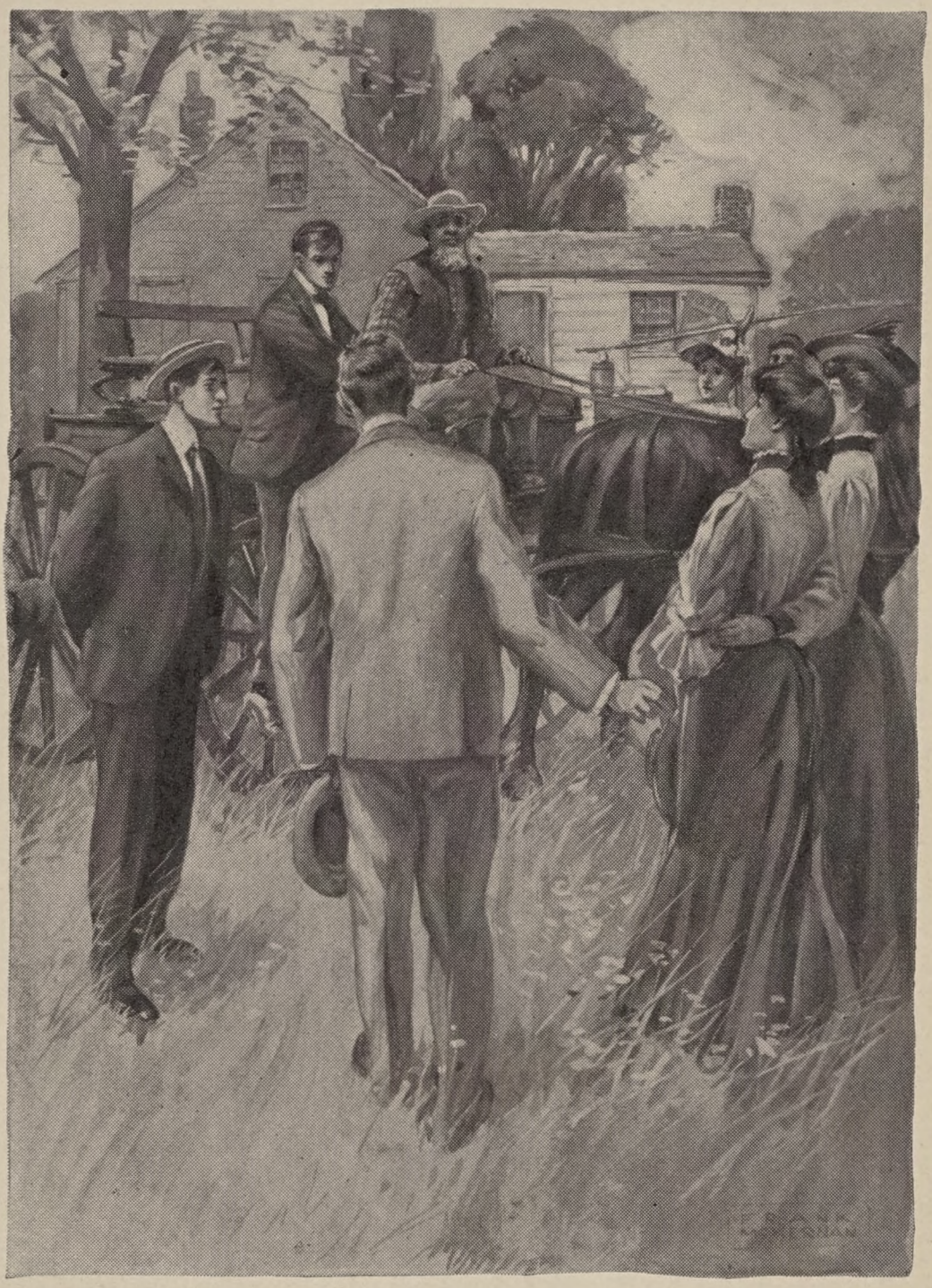
"How did it happen, Mr. Phelps?" inquired the father of one of the boys, who, as we know, had been a member of the party.

"We stopped here to see the ruins of this old house. Miss Stone wanted to, and she ran on to see the old well-sweep there. She was a little ahead of me, and then before I knew it she dropped right into the well. It was covered over, but the wood was decayed and gave way when she stepped on it, I fancy. I don't see how she ever escaped going straight down into the water. The well must be at least forty feet deep."

"I grabbed the roots," said Miss Stone, who was sitting up now and partly recovered. "That stopped my fall, and there was a place there where I could put my foot. So I rested it there and hung on. But I couldn't have done it much longer," she added, as she closed her eyes as if she would shut out even the remembrance of the peril.

"You look as if you had almost fallen in, yourself, Mr. Phelps," said Mott quietly. "Look at your hands!"

For the first time Will was aware that his hands



"'You can take Miss Stone back, anyway, and that's the main thing.'"
Page 221.

were bleeding. He glanced at them, but made no response, and when a half-hour had elapsed the sound of horses and of a wagon of some kind coming swiftly up the hillside could be distinctly heard. In a brief time it came within sight and it was seen that Baldwin and a farmer were seated on the spring-seat of an ordinary farm wagon. The student leaped to the ground as the wagon was halted beside the group, and said hastily, "I found this man right down here near the foot of the mountain. I thought I wouldn't wait to go on to Winthrop, so I told him I'd give him five dollars if he'd come up here and take Miss Stone back to the village. And he came."

"Yes, here I be," said the farmer.

"All right. You can take Miss Stone back, anyway, and that's the main thing," said the man who was now the leader of the little party. The wagon-seat was rearranged and the young lady was assisted to her place, the mother of one of the boys taking a seat beside her on one side and one of the young ladies on the other.

"Mr. Phelps ought to ride too," suggested Mott. "He looks as if he had been through the war."

Will insistently declined, and soon the wagon departed, with the remainder of the party following on foot. Again and again Will Phelps was compelled to describe what had occurred, but a measure of the excitement had departed when at last the little group re-entered the college town.

Too wearied to leave his room that evening, Will

was delighted when at about nine o'clock Mott came and reported that Miss Stone was still suffering from the shock and that her return to New York had been postponed for two days by the village physician.

"She thinks you're a wonder, Mr. Phelps," said Mott with enthusiasm.

"Does she?"

"Indeed, she does. One never knows what's going to happen, does he?" continued Mott. "Who would have thought that such a thing as this would be a part of our trip when we started out?"

"No one." Will looked at the freshman, who plainly had been sobered by the experiences of the day and wondered if it was possible that there could be any foundation for the suspicions he had entertained.

"That's so, Mr. Phelps. That's so. I expect to have Clark come around and preach me a sermon. He always does when anything serious happens. You know he rooms right next to me."

"Yes. Does he come often?"

"Depends on what you call 'often.' Once is too much for me. I can't stand him, you know. He's got religion all right, but he thinks it's all in dealing in a lot of pious twaddle."

"What do you think it consists of, Mott?"

"What? Religion? Oh, I don't know. I never thought much about it."

"Think of it now. Suppose some man asked you, what would you say?"

"I'd tell him to see you, Mr. Phelps." Mott's

mood had changed, and apparently his air of indifference and flippancy had returned.

"What should I tell him?"

"You know, Mr. Phelps. You know!" said Mott decidedly. "You don't talk so much as Clark, but somehow I never am where you are without thinking I ought to drop some things—if not others," he added dryly.

"What do you think you ought to drop, Mott?"

"Oh, I don't know. Bothering Splinter, for one thing, I suppose. But if he'd quit bothering me, I'd do the same for him. Honestly, Mr. Phelps, do you think it's square for him to do all the tormenting?"

Will's own experiences with "Splinter" were not so dim that he failed to sympathize in a measure with the freshman, but he thought the opportunity was too good to be lost, and so he told him in detail of his own struggle[1] with the professor of Greek. Mott evidently was interested, but still somewhat incredulous.

"I like a square man, anyway," the freshman said at last.

"So do I. But it's a good thing sometimes for a fellow to ask himself if he is square."

"Don't you think I am, Mr. Phelps?"

"I want you to be. Sometimes, though, I don't know," said Will seriously.

"Say it, Mr. Phelps! Say it! You've got something you want to say to me. I've known it for a long time. Let me have it straight. I'm not afraid."

[1] See "Winning His 'W.'"

CHAPTER XXIII

A LONG PULL

THE attitude of the freshman, perplexing though it was, and his apparent earnestness caused Will Phelps hastily to decide to broach the subject which for some time had been uppermost in his thoughts. Strange as it was, he found himself the one who was almost on the defensive as he approached the topic, and he was much more excited than his visitor, though his voice did not tremble when at last he spoke.

"Mott, have you heard of anything being lost lately in college?" he began.

"Nothing except the bloom of Splinter's youth, as I told you, and my five dollars."

"Drop that, freshman! This is a more serious matter."

To Will it seemed as if the expression of Mott's face changed slightly, but he could not be positive. It might have been the reflection of his own feelings.

"What is it, Mr. Phelps?" inquired Mott slowly.

"There have been a good many things taken lately."

"What things? I don't understand you."

"Well, to put it straight, I mean money and some other things too. One fellow has had a gold watch

taken, for example. Of course, the police in almost every city have been notified and the—the thief will be run down. The money is a different affair. But the man that took it will be found before long. And you haven't heard a word of it?"

"Not a word, Mr. Phelps. I've lost some money myself, but I never thought of charging any one with stealing it. I guess I could have told where it went if I had to pass a 'test' on it."

"That's all right, but this, I tell you, is a different thing."

"Do you suspect anybody?"

"Yes. I have had my suspicions."

"Who?"

"I can't tell you now, or at least I sha'n't. It's too serious a matter to bring up till you are sure. But I don't mind telling you that I think it's one fellow at the bottom of the whole thing and he'll be found out just as surely as you are sitting in that chair."

There was a brief silence in the room and then Mott said quietly, "Why did you tell me about it, Mr. Phelps?"

"Why, you see, I thought—I didn't know but you might have lost something or heard something about it." Will's confusion at the abrupt question of the freshman was decidedly annoying and he was angry at himself for displaying it.

"Yes, I see," said Mott slowly, rising as he spoke.

"Don't hurry, freshman," protested Will quickly.

"You were not born yesterday and you can keep your eyes open. You may be able to help us run the fellow down, and the matter concerns the whole college."

"Yes," said Mott slowly.

"Some of the money was taken from your dormitory and some from here. It's a nasty mess, Mott." Will endeavored to speak cordially, for his heart almost misgave him for having referred to the affair at all. It was too serious a charge to bring even by implication, and his question as to the part the freshman might have had in the matter was very serious now. "I don't think you'd better speak of it to any one. I don't know why I told you, only I thought you might have heard something about it."

"No. I haven't heard anything."

"Well, if you do, you'll let me know, won't you?"

"Yes, I'll let you know." Mott's voice and manner were so different from his customary tones and bearing that Will's perplexity increased. Was the fellow guilty, after all? Had the implication been taken for more than he meant it to be? Did the freshman's manner indicate guilt or was it that he was deeply hurt by the implied suspicions? Will could not decide, but his own manner became more confused, and in his efforts to make Mott feel that he must not believe too much was implied, he made matters even worse.

"We've got some traps set," Will said hastily, "and if you hear of anything or can think of any-

thing to do, as I believe you can, you must come straight to me with it. Will you do it, freshman?"

"Yes, sir. I'll do it." There was no enthusiasm in Mott's reply, and when in a brief time the freshman departed, his subdued manner was a source of still greater confusion to the troubled junior.

His suspicions that Mott had resented the conversation were confirmed as the days passed and the freshman no longer came to his room. Even when Will met him on the street the hearty greeting he gave was returned in a subdued manner and there was no doubt as to the fact of a breach having been made. Sometimes Will blamed himself for having spoken, and then again his conviction was strengthened that the change in Mott's manner indicated guilt. His feeling for the freshman had become stronger than he knew at the time, and the changed relations had become a source of sorrow to the junior.

Will had called twice upon Miss Stone before the physician gave the desired consent for her to return to her home, and on each occasion he had been tempted to consult her in the matter that was so seriously troubling him. But he had decided that it would be unfair to both for him to do so as long as the solution of the problem was still so uncertain. Both he and Mott were at the station when the young lady departed, but the freshman avoided any opportunity for conversation, and the junior had returned alone to the college.

A plan which he and Foster had devised of marking

a bill and leaving it in a place where a thief would be almost certain to find it, if he investigated the contents of the unlocked drawers of Will's desk, also failed, and the losses apparently ceased, for not another theft was reported during the winter. This fact did not serve to allay Will's fears or suspicions, but the rather increased them. Had his warning to Mott been heeded? The coincidence, if it was nothing more, between his interview with Mott and the sudden cessation of the thefts was, to his troubled mind, not without significance; but he felt that it was impossible for him to do more, and so he waited with such patience as he could command, either for the solution of the mystery to be found or for the freshman to return to his former allegiance.

Meanwhile, Will Phelps gave himself to the legitimate work of the college as never he had done before. His purpose to inform Doctor Brown of the decision to do better work was abandoned, because he decided it would be better for him to do the work and then let the results speak for themselves.

The winter days that followed were somewhat dreary, and the monotony of the steady grind of the daily work was irksome, but Will was aroused by the sting of the young professor's words and resolutely held himself to the task, especially in his history. He speedily found that there was an exhilaration in the work such as he had never known before, and his interest in the subject, which was treated with vividness and life by the enthusiastic young teacher,

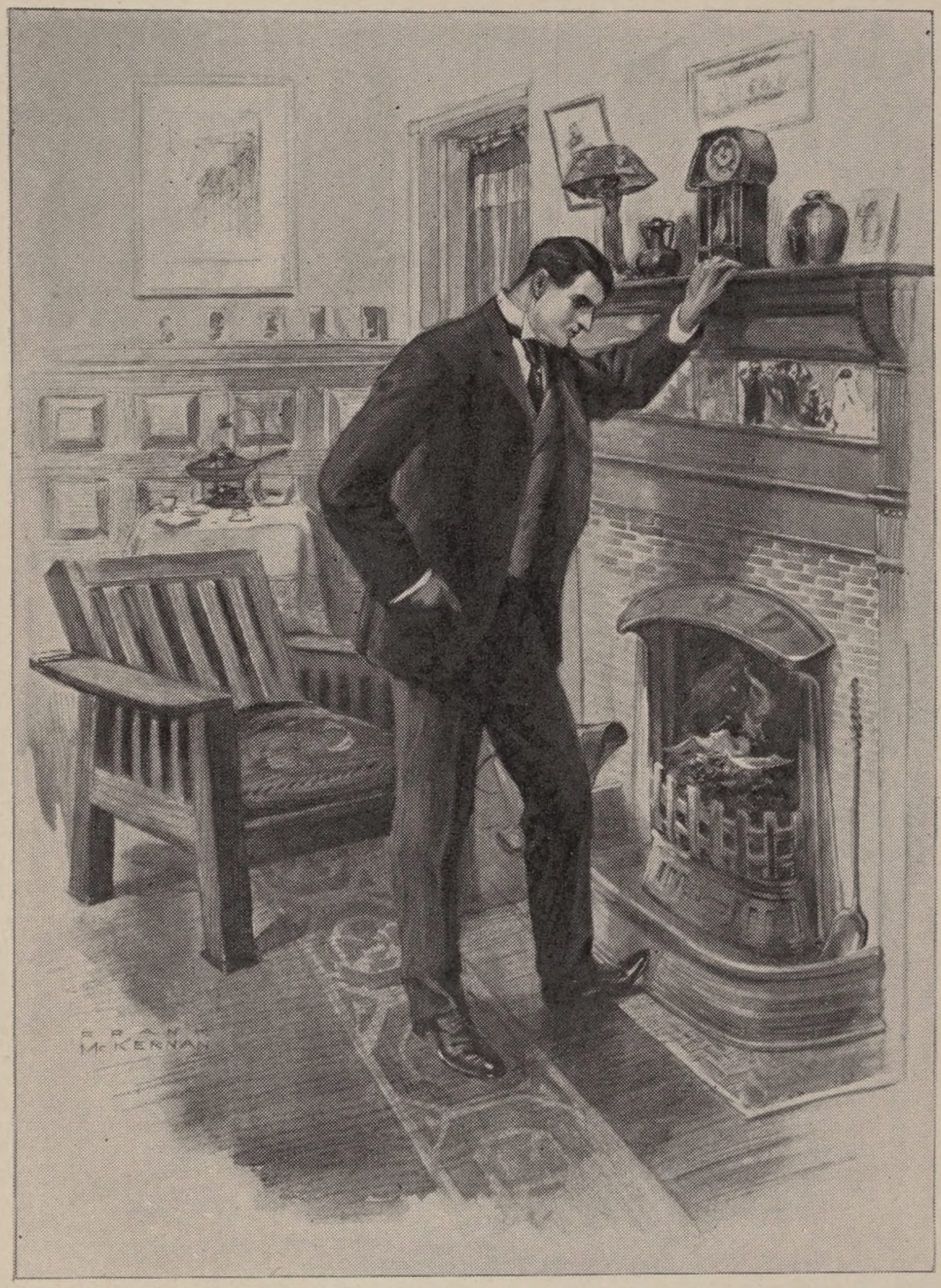
became more marked with every passing day. He found that he was learning not only of deeds that had been done and of men who did things, but also of influences lying behind. The story of the achievements, the struggles and triumphs, the forces at work, the causes and results of the laws of life that had been at work and were still working, were fascinating. Occasionally, in the satisfaction which he felt in his work, there came a vision of a possible prize in history at the close of the year, but, though the vision was tempting, he did not dwell upon it, for it was much too like a shadow to give promise of substantial results.

The poem which he had sent to the various magazines was returned with clock-like regularity, until the editors of six distinct publications had had the privilege of perusing it. In every case he was informed that "the failure to use the poem was not due to any inherent defect, but it was returned solely because of the pressure upon their columns, the want of available space," etc., etc.

The familiar expressions had ceased to comfort his heart by this time, and he had even hardened himself so that he could smile when the well-remembered platitudes appeared in his opened letters. With slight hope that his poem would meet with any better reception, he had sent it on to the seventh magazine, "just to complete the number," he assured himself grimly, and when, after the lapse of a few weeks, the manuscript was again returned, he did not even stop to

read the printed statement that "the failure to avail themselves of the privilege which had been so kindly submitted to the editors was not due to any inherent lack of merit," etc., etc., but consigned the envelope, with manuscript and letter enclosed, to the flames.

"That's the end of that," he said to himself grimly as he watched the paper curl and twist in the fire. "Thackeray may have submitted 'Vanity Fair' to nineteen different publishers before he found one to appreciate its merits, but seven are enough for me. What twaddle it was! How did I ever have the nerve to send it, anyway?" Will forced himself to face the matter courageously, though the effort did not come easily. "Shall I quit? If it isn't in me, what's the use of bothering those polite editors any more? Bah! 'No lack of merit'! Why, that's just what the trouble was! Why couldn't they say so honestly and be done with it? Taffy and molasses and soft soap, combined or singly, are not a very substantial diet. I'd rather have a man talk to me straight, as Doctor Brown did." He paused for a moment as the last bit of paper on the hearth curled, blazed for a moment, and then fell apart in gray ashes. "I'll do it! I'll do it!" he said suddenly. "I'll do it now!" And in his enthusiasm he slapped his sides and then eagerly seated himself at his desk and began to write. The plan which had suddenly presented itself to his mind appealed strongly to him and he was in a fever of excitement and interest as he drove his pen swiftly across the white paper before him.



"'That's the end of that,' he said to himself grimly as he watched the paper curl."

Page 230.

Even when Foster came into the room he did not glance up, and his room-mate, knowing Will's habits well and believing that his friend was preparing one of his numerous papers in history, did not speak until it was time for dinner, and then Will said, "Go on without me, Foster. I'll be up by and by."

But the hours passed and the junior did not rise from his desk. His interest and excitement did not flag, and when ten o'clock came he had completed his work. "That will do! That's all right!" he said to himself enthusiastically, as he thrust the manuscript into a drawer and went out for a walk. Upon his return he busied himself with his studies, though it was difficult to banish from his mind the recent task upon which he had been engaged. The clock in the tower announced the hour of midnight before Will Phelps was in bed.

On the following day he re-read the manuscript, and with a sinking of the heart. Was this the stuff that he had written on the preceding evening? What could have made him believe it was good for anything? It too was twaddle worse even than his sophomoric appeal to the "rapid, rolling, rounded orb." In disgust with himself and sadly depressed, he half-angrily thrust the manuscript back into the drawer and hastened from the room.

In his zeal in his work—a zeal that was partly due to his determination to show Doctor Brown that his estimate had been not altogether correct, and in part due to Will's own consciousness that the criticism had

been based upon a weakness which he was compelled to acknowledge to himself was true—he had heroically decided not to try for a place on the basket-ball team. Basket-ball was one of the chief relaxations of the winter months, and the decision not to play had cost Will Phelps not a little, for he was acknowledged to be one of the best men in college. An occasional outing with bob-sled or skates, the brief vacation at Christmas had been all that he had permitted himself to take. With his enthusiastic temperament, whatever Will Phelps did was very likely to be overdone. There was no comparative degree in his make-up. He was one who must do his best in whatever he undertook, or he was very likely not to do anything, and when the zeal was upon him for work to show Doctor Brown that he could do more than make a "showy recitation" in history, he dropped other important matters in the determination to succeed in the one line at least.

When the spring days came, however, something of a change came over the junior's attitude. History was still his objective point, and neither "spring fever" nor spring weather was able to cause him to neglect that department of his work. Other departments, perhaps equally important, did suffer somewhat, but Will explained to Foster that "he must have some out-door exercise or he would go stale."

As a consequence, the junior entered with all his zeal into the preliminary contests in tennis—the contests by which the selection of the two men to repre-

sent Winthrop in the intercollegiate contests were to be made. Agile, supple, quick of motion and mind, Will Phelps played the game as he did many other things in which his interest was generously aroused, with might, mind, and strength.

As a consequence, there was no surprise among the Winthrop students when the preliminaries and semi-finals had passed to learn that Will Phelps was one who had gained a place among the finals. Nor was the surprise increased when it was also learned that he and Mott, the freshman, were the only two left in the contest, to one of whom the championship of the college was to be awarded. And the day of the deciding contest had arrived.

CHAPTER XXIV

THE TOURNAMENT

A GREAT crowd of students had assembled to watch the contest, and it was soon apparent that the sympathies of the greater number were with Will Phelps. The young junior, in spite of the fact that he knew he was certain of a position now on the team that was to represent his college, nevertheless was eager to win, for the championship of Winthrop would then be his for the year. It was already certain that he and Mott would represent the college in the "doubles," but the present contest would not only decide the championship but determine which of the two should be the representative in the "singles" at the coming intercollegiate games.

Will glanced at the face of his opponent, and what he saw there convinced him that he would be compelled to do his utmost to win. Determination and dislike were both expressed in the freshman's face. Mott had been a surprise to the entire student body in the skill he had displayed. He had made no reference to his skill as a tennis player, and the steady line of success that had followed him in the tournament had clearly shown him to be an expert—a "find," as the manager enthusiastically declared.

Will's face was set and his cheeks were somewhat

pale when the game at last began. He studied his opponent as the first few balls were returned, and speedily decided that his hope of winning depended upon the steadiness of his play. It seemed almost a reversal of the natural dispositions of the two players to watch their methods. Will, impulsive, quick, active, was not attempting to make any spectacular returns or any specially swift strokes. His main attempt seemed ever to be to return the ball, though naturally he varied the swiftness of his strokes. He was quiet and collected, ready and watchful, but steadiness seemed to be his most marked characteristic.

On the other hand, Mott, who had ever given the impression of stolidity, was endeavoring to play a swift and quick game. His service was exceptionally strong and at times the light ball sped along the ground so swiftly that it was impossible for Will to return it. At such times the junior did not even make an attempt to reach the ball, apparently husbanding his strength with the utmost care. Some of Mott's brilliant strokes drew forth the enthusiastic plaudits of the assembly, but at such times it was seen that Will's movements became apparently slower as the light flashed from his eyes and the lines about his mouth became more set. Mott danced about the court, striving to return every ball, and though many of his swift strokes were outside, nevertheless the first two games were won by him with apparent ease by the scores of 6-4 and 6-3.

The third game, however, went to Will by a score of 6-2, and the next he also won by the score of 6-4. The fifth and sixth games then fell to him, and the first set was declared to be his by the score of 6-2. His steadiness and the fact that he was holding some of his strength in reserve were counting strongly in his favor. Mott's face was dripping with perspiration, while it was seen that, though Will's hair was wet as he tossed it back from his forehead, he was not laboring nor suffering as was his opponent.

The second set was closer, but was decided in Will's favor. He had a good lead in the third, when Foster, who was watching his room-mate closely, was convinced that he saw a change come over the expression of Will's face. Whether he was correct or not he did not know, but the third set was deuce, and when at last it came to an end the freshman had won it by a score of 9-7. The freshman contingent in the crowd enthusiastically cheered their classmate, but the following set had not proceeded far before it was evident that Will Phelps was to win it. Mott returned the ball savagely and tried to lob, and then again would fiercely return, but his hand in a measure seemed to have lost its cunning, or his head the cooler judgment that was required, for the ball repeatedly was "outside," and the wildness of the freshman increased rather than decreased.

There was an expression of sympathy in Will's eyes when Mott failed to return the last service of the junior and the contest had thus been decided in favor

of Will Phelps. Ignoring the cheers and unmindful of the crowd that rushed upon the court when it was announced that Phelps had won three of the five sets scheduled, and that Mott having declared that he would yield the unnecessary set which could have no effect upon the award, he stepped quickly toward the net to comply with the custom of shaking hands with his opponent and congratulating him upon the skill he had displayed in the contest. To his surprise, however, Mott had turned away, apparently ignoring the friendly overtures. Will glanced at his foe in surprise and then turned hastily back to his comrades. Uncertain whether or not the action of the freshman had been seen by others, he caught a glance of mingled anger and amusement from Foster, and then with a derisive shrug of his shoulders put his racquet in its case and prepared to return to his room. The congratulations of his friends were marvelously comforting, and his heart was light when he and Foster as last were in their room.

"It's great, Will," Foster was saying warmly. "How does it seem to be the champion tennis player of Winthrop?"

"I like it. Of course, I like it. But somehow, now that it has come it doesn't seem to be so much, after all."

Foster laughed as he replied, "You're like Napoleon. He was but twenty-nine years old, Doctor Brown was telling us, when he declared that glory itself was insipid."

"I'm not so bad as that," laughed Will. "If I had won, if I shall win, if I shall have won in the games with Alden and the other colleges, then I might be able to talk of your vanity of vanities. Just now, though, it doesn't look to me in just that light. It would be a great thing for Winthrop if I should happen to win next week, wouldn't it? But of course I sha'n't."

"There's no 'of course' about it! You'll do your best and the whole college will be satisfied with that. You may win."

"And I may not," laughed Will lightly, though he was cheered by the candid words of his more sober-minded room-mate. "Say, Foster," he said abruptly, "did you see what Mott did to-day?"

"See what?"

"You know what I mean. He wouldn't shake hands with me after the game."

"That's worse for him than it is for you," responded Foster soberly.

"But you saw him?"

"Yes, I saw him."

"He hasn't spoken to me for months."

"You can stand that, can't you? What's the matter with the fellow, anyhow? He used to be very sweet on you."

"He's evidently lost his 'crush.'" Will had never spoken to his room-mate of his suspicions, nor had he referred to his last interview with Mott.

"He'll come around all right, that is, if you want

him to. I can't say, for my part, I ever was very strongly drawn to him."

"I liked him. I got so that I felt a little responsible for him. I don't know now how we'll get along in our doubles. You see, we'll have to play together, and somehow I can't feel quite sure of him."

"The freshman will be tickled to do his best. You'll just have to make him toe the mark, Will."

"And even then I'm afraid of him."

"You needn't be." Foster swung around on his chair and pulled open the top drawer of his desk. You'll have to keep a strong hand on him," he continued. "He's showy but not steady. Great, g-r-e-a-t——" he broke in abruptly, an expression of astonishment creeping over his face.

"What's up? What's wrong, Foster?" demanded Will, sitting quickly erect and staring in his astonishment at his friend.

"Look there, will you, Will?" said Foster slowly and in a low voice, pointing, as he spoke, to the open drawer in front of him.

Will bounded from his seat and eagerly peered into the place at which Foster was pointing. His astonishment was as great as his friend's at what he saw, for there on top of some of the neatly folded papers was a gold watch, and lying near it was a crisp ten-dollar bill.

"That's yours, isn't it, Foster?" said Will as he lifted the watch in his hand.

"It certainly is," replied Foster, as he took the

watch and examined it. "It's mine, all right," he added.

"Where do you suppose it came from?"

"I haven't the slightest idea."

"It's here, anyway."

"Yes, it's here, and that's the main thing."

"It beats anything I ever heard of. And this ten-dollar bill too!"

"I think the fellow that took it had a conscience."

"I guess not when he took it. He may have had afterward. At any rate, he's brought back the watch and the bill too. Why, Foster, it's just like picking up money in the street. I wish the fellow that took mine would bring it back too. Maybe he has!" he added excitedly, instantly turning to his own desk. A careful and thorough search, however, failed to reveal the presence of any restored valuables.

"Foster, I've an idea," Will said slowly as he turned about and faced his room-mate.

"Hang onto it."

"I mean to."

"What is it?"

"I'm going to hang onto it, just as you told me. Perhaps later I'll explain it, but not now. I'm not used to such possessions."

Foster laughed, and the conversation ended, but the mystery of the return of the lost watch and money had not been explained when several days had elapsed, though meanwhile it had been a topic of frequent conversation, at least on Foster's part. As for Will, he

had not referred to the "idea" that had occurred to him at the time of the discovery of the watch in the drawer, but that it had not departed from his mind was evident even to Foster, who was thoroughly accustomed to all the moods of his room-mate.

Meanwhile, the interest of the college in the approaching intercollegiate contest in tennis was steadily increasing. Six colleges were in the league, and for the first time since its formation the tournament was to be held in Winthrop. Every one of the six colleges was to be represented in the "singles" and "doubles," and many outside visitors, as well as students from the various colleges, were expected to be present.

Daily Will Phelps and Mott had been practising, the best of the players in college being their willing victims. The freshman, though he had spoken to Will only when a word seemed to be necessary, had played not only brilliantly but steadily, and Will's hopes began to rise that the showing Winthrop would make in the "doubles" would bring no discredit upon the college. As for his own part in the "singles," his heart had many misgivings, but he kept his own counsel, practised daily, and awaited the coming of the eventful day with such patience as he was able to command.

At last the evening preceding the eventful day had arrived. The little village was alive with visitors, and the evening gave promise of an ideal day on the morrow. The green upon the hillsides, the grass on the

lawns in the college grounds, the flowers, the very leaves upon the trees, all seemed to have conspired to make the scene complete.

Will Phelps, anxious but self-restrained, had gone alone to the post office, eager to forget for the moment the arrival of the steadily increasing crowd and his own feeling of anxiety in view of what was expected of him by the entire college on the following day.

He had just turned from the office when he found himself face to face with Miss Stone. His surprise at the unexpected meeting—for he had not heard that she was to be among the visitors—was so great that he almost ignored the reproachful look she gave him.

"Why didn't you come down to see me last evening, Mr. Phelps? And I sent for you too."

"'Sent for me'! Why, I didn't know you were in town. I didn't know you expected to be."

"Didn't Alfred tell you? Didn't he give you my message?" she inquired in surprise.

"He certainly did not."

"I can't understand it. He told me that he told you I was here."

Will fancied that he could "understand it" perhaps better than she, but her words plainly indicated at least that Mott had not told her of the break which had come in their own personal relations.

As they walked up the street together, Will was almost unmindful of the dreaded morrow, so interested was he in what Miss Stone was saying. A light

reference of hers to her experience in the old well on the occasion of her former visit, caused him to say quickly, "Will you wait for me here on the corner? I've something in my room I want to—to show you."

"Certainly," replied Miss Stone, as Will bounded toward his room.

As he came around the corner of the building he ran full upon Mott and another man, whom, in the dim light, he could not recognize, but he had heard with a sinking heart the words which Mott had been speaking.

"Bet your last dollar—your last cent—that we don't win even the first set in the doubles! Do it, I tell you!" Mott had repeated when a feeble protest had been made. "I'm not so sure of the singles, but I know what I'm talking about in the doubles. Do what I tell you. Your last cent that we don't win a set."

CHAPTER XXV

FEARS AND MISGIVINGS

RESTRAINING his first impulse, which was to stop and charge Mott with an intent to "throw" the doubles, Will Phelps dashed quickly past the two students and darted up the stairway. He was confident that he had recognized Mott's companion in crime as Morey, a freshman, who already had made an unenviable reputation as a "sport," to use the college vernacular, but the light had not been sufficiently clear to enable him to be positive.

Anger and disgust were mingled in Will Phelps' feelings. Mott deserved to be exposed to the entire college! A more dastardly piece of work had not been known in all the annals of Winthrop. Was it possible that he had been mistaken? Had he imputed a meaning to Mott's words which the freshman did not deserve? Will had secured the manuscript for which he had come and had departed from his room, carefully closing the door behind him as he did so. For a moment he stood at the top of the stairway, uncertain what to do. As he thought over the words he had overheard it seemed to him they could have but one explanation. Mott had deliberately plotted to lose the doubles. Perhaps his

plot was entirely unnecessary, Will thought grimly, but if he was guilty, the transaction certainly branded him as one of the worst fellows that ever had entered Winthrop.

Hesitating no longer, he started resolutely down the stairs. If Mott and Morey were still where they had been when he had passed them, he decided that he would stop for a moment and at least inform them that he was not ignorant of the plot they had formed. He was still excited and angry, but when he passed out from the building neither of the men was anywhere to be seen.

His manuscript was in his hands, and quickly he ran to the place where he had left Miss Stone. As he approached, he could see that some one was talking to her, and as he drew nearer he discovered that it was Mott. The coming of Will, however, caused the freshman to depart hastily, and as Will took his place beside the young lady, and together they started up the street, he said:

"I'm sorry I kept you waiting."

"You didn't, long, Mr. Phelps. Besides, I had good company. Alfred came right after you left, and he has kept me laughing all the time. What a boy he is!"

Will felt that he could join heartily in her expressed conviction, but he did not speak of his own feeling. "How does Mott feel about the games? Does he think we have any show? You know he and I are together in the doubles."

"He thinks you have a good chance to win."

"Does he?" said Will quickly. "Did he say that?"

"Yes. He isn't sure that you will win both."

"Strange he should have such a feeling as that," laughed Will. "I'm afraid it isn't altogether original with him, for I've had some such thoughts myself. Which does he think we stand the better chance in—the singles or the doubles?"

"He said if it wasn't for him you'd surely win the doubles. But he is afraid he won't be able to keep up his part. He thinks you are a great tennis player, Mr. Phelps."

"That's good of him. I hope he will do his full share."

"Oh, he will. You needn't have any fear about that. He says there may not be very much in him, but what there is he is going to make count."

"I hope he will," said Will soberly.

"You don't know Alfred," said Miss Stone warmly. "Of course, he isn't much more than a boy, and he hasn't had much experience, but I am sure he will do his very best. You must not be angry with him if he does not come fully up to your expectations, Mr. Phelps," said Miss Stone softly.

For a moment Will was silent, then he said quietly, "I will tell you frankly, Miss Stone, that I have some reasons that make me a little afraid. It isn't what I may think or say, it is what the college will do if Mott should fizzle. Of course, it is as true of myself as it is

of him," he hastily added, "but I do want him to understand just what his selection means. If he succeeds, nothing will be too good for him, and if he doesn't, why, nothing will be too bad. If he does what the whole college knows is his best there won't be any hard feeling, but if he doesn't, then——"

"Then what?" broke in the young lady quickly.

"Why, you know as well as I do," said Will a little uneasily. "That's the price a fellow has to pay for making the team."

"Have you talked with him, Mr. Phelps?"

"Not exactly. You see—I——" began Will in some confusion.

"Do you think it would do any good for me to say to him what you have said to me, and to urge him to do his very best?"

"I do! I know it would!" replied Will eagerly. "Only be sure and don't let him know that any such suggestion came from me."

It was too dark to enable Will to perceive the smile that appeared on Miss Stone's face, but they had now arrived at the house in which she was to stay, and as they approached the entrance Will said, "I went up to my room to get something I should like to show you."

"Come in, Mr. Phelps," she responded. "I shall be delighted."

"If there is any one in the reception room I'll just leave it with you after I have stayed a few minutes. You see, I have to be careful of my hours to-night,"

he explained lightly. "If there shouldn't be any one in there then I would like to read it to you myself."

"'Read it to me'? Is it a poem, Mr. Phelps?"

"Not exactly," stammered Will in some confusion. "It's——"

"Well, here we are, anyway!" exclaimed the girl as they entered the hall.

A glance at the reception room was sufficient to show that it was already occupied. Will Phelps turned to Miss Stone and said quickly, as he thrust a roll into her hand, "I shall be glad to have you read it. Let me know to-morrow just exactly what you think of it. You'll do that, won't you?"

"Certainly, Mr. Phelps, though I don't think my opinion will be of much value."

Will laughed lightly, and then they both entered the room. Their coming was hailed with pleasure, and the presence of the representative tennis player of Winthrop was the immediate cause of a multitude of questions concerning the outlook for the games, what he thought of the prospects, and similar queries. To them all Will responded that he was absolutely without any convictions on the subject. Indeed, he was doing his utmost to banish the thought of the games from his mind for the present in order that he might have all his thoughts on them on the coming day. And yet Will found the manifest interest and the place which he occupied in the thoughts of the company wonderfully comforting to his own heart. The interest and implied praise were like a tonic, and his

courage and determination to do his utmost to win were stronger than ever when, after an hour had elapsed, he arose to depart.

As he stood near the entrance to the hall Mott came bounding into the room. His entrance was like the coming of a fresh breeze, and in a moment the entire assembly was laughing loudly at his droll remarks. Will had become quiet at the entrance of the freshman, but he had watched Mott, somewhat puzzled by the apparently unnatural animation that he was displaying. Once when he turned away from Mott he felt that Miss Stone was keenly regarding him, but as she too turned her eyes away when she perceived that she was being observed, he thought but little of it.

"You're not like Phelps," one of the students was saying to Mott. "He's going to leave us now to get some sleep. I don't see that you are sleepy, Mott."

"I think Mr. Phelps will have his eyes open to-morrow," said Mott, without glancing at his fellow-member of the tennis team.

"My eyes are open now," said Will quietly. "They have been open for more than an hour. The trouble is to close them."

"Only an hour, Mr. Phelps?" laughed one of the girls.

"Wide open for that time," responded Will.

"What do you see, Mr. Phelps?" inquired Mott in mock solemnity. One of the girls near the freshman giggled, but the room was still when Will said seri-

ously. "I see more than I wish I could see. I see what the fellows expect of me—and of Mott," he added.

"They expect you both to do your best, Mr. Phelps, and I am sure they will not be disappointed," said Miss Stone quickly.

"There was a fellow in college three—some time ago," Will hastily corrected himself, "who was accused of 'throwing' a game of basketball. He had been heard making an arrangement with another fellow who was a great sport to bet all he had and all he could get that Winthrop would lose."

"Did the college lose, Mr. Phelps?" said Miss Stone quickly.

"No; but it wasn't any fault of this fellow. He did his best to bring it about."

"What happened to him?" inquired Mott.

"He left college. His health suddenly failed him. I think his eyes gave out," said Will dryly.

"Mr. Phelps, if you 'throw' the game to-morrow I'll never forgive you!" It was Miller's sister who was speaking, and at her words all laughed except Miss Stone, who was watching Will's face intently.

"Mr. Phelps, if you'll watch me, I'll watch you," said Mott. The freshman's face was inscrutable, and if the story Will had told had affected him, the result was not manifest in his voice or face.

"Why did you tell us that story?"

It was Miss Stone who spoke, and something in her tone caused every one to turn and look at her.

"It's not a nice story, Miss Stone, I acknowledge," said Will, facing her. "I can't tell you just why I spoke of it. A good many things are on a fellow's mind just before a game. If you had been in Winthrop as long as I have you would understand how one feels when the college expects so much of him. He will do his best, but sometimes his best is not good enough. Then——"

"Then what?" demanded Miss Stone.

"Then sometimes they try to explain."

"Who are 'they'? Who tries to explain?"

Did she suspect the reason for his allusion to the former disgraced player? Will could not decide. Her face expressed her earnestness, but whether it was protest or fear that was uppermost in her thoughts was not plain.

"Oh, sometimes the fellows accuse a man of not doing his best," said Will.

"Will they accuse you of that?" she demanded.

"I shall try to prevent it."

"Will they accuse Alfred of it?"

"I hope not." Will laughed as he spoke and tried to make light of the question, but his eyes sought Mott's face. There was nothing there to enlighten him. Apparently Mott had not heard, for he was talking to a girl near him.

Will at once took his departure, but he was aware of a certain element of constraint, both in himself and among some of the company he had left in the house. There were moments when he accused him-

self bitterly for having made any reference to the treachery of the basketball player. And yet there was need for something to be done. Mott must be made to understand clearly that if he had entered into any such rascally plan as to bring dishonor upon the name of Winthrop, his movements were already known. If, on the other hand, he had misjudged him, then the freshman would not be likely to make more of the relation of the incident than it warranted. It was Miss Stone herself, however, who troubled Will most of all as he thought over the words that had been spoken. Her quiet questions were certainly direct and fearless, but what was implied was difficult for him to conjecture. Did she suspect him of questioning the honesty of her cousin? Had his previous conversation with her been such as to lead her to think that Mott was not to be relied upon?

These questions and many similar ones were in Will's thoughts as he walked slowly back to his room. Not even to Foster, whom he found waiting for him when he entered, did he confide his suspicions and fears, and soon he went to his bedroom and retired for the night.

The longed-for morning arrived cloudless. Not a sound could be heard when Will first opened his eyes, but when his breakfast had been eaten, and in his white flannel suit, his jersey bearing the "W." which he had won two years before by his labors on the track team, he started toward the courts, there was excitement sufficient to inspire the most slug-

gish. Rows of chairs surrounded the courts, college colors were much in evidence, parties of young people were laughing and chatting as they watched the sturdy representatives of the various colleges who were already on the courts engaged in preliminary practice, and the entire scene was one that deeply stirred Will's heart.

Glancing about the assemblage, he perceived Miss Stone in the midst of a group on one side of the court, and, taking a little banner, with its vivid " W." in the middle of the streamer, he at once sought her out and, bowing low, presented her with the emblem. To Will it seemed for the moment as if there was a lack of enthusiasm in her manner of receiving it, but a loud call for him compelled him to leave the group and at once prepare for the coming contest.

CHAPTER XXVI

THE SINGLES

THE volleying and preliminary practice were soon ended and the games were about to begin. Three courts were to be used at the same time, and when the umpires had taken their seats in the chairs that had been placed on high stands or tables and all the drawings had been made, Will Phelps took his position to face the representative of Alden, for in the selection of lots it had come to pass that the two colleges that were the fiercest rivals and to one of which, doubtless, the championship would be awarded, had been pitted against each other at the very beginning.

Will glanced at his competitor and perceived that he was a tall, muscular fellow, sinewy and of a dark complexion. That his antagonist was a man of endurance was manifest in his wiry frame and bronzed arms and face. The general style of play which had won for himself the championship of Winthrop might not avail in the present contest Will quickly decided, and he eagerly watched the man, hoping soon to obtain an insight into his style and prepare himself to meet it. The quiet bearing of the Winthrop junior belied the nervous strain which he was undergoing, and many marked his apparent self-

possession who had slight comprehension of the hidden fires.

The word at last was given, and the umpire had barely called "Play" before the Alden representative, who was to serve first, drove the ball swiftly down the court and Will was unable to return it.

"Were you ready, Mr. Phelps?" inquired the umpire hastily.

"Yes, sir," replied Will quietly.

"Fifteen love!" called the umpire, recording the score. "Outside!" he shouted when Alden's swift ball struck outside the lines on the next serve.

The second ball was not served so swiftly, but when Will endeavored to return it he drove the ball into the net.

"Thirty love!" called the umpire, and a sigh arose from the Winthrop supporters, while the Alden contingent broke into applause.

Again the players were ready, and the Alden champion raised his long arm on high. With lightning-like speed the ball was served, and as Will glanced at it, aware that he would be unable to return it, he did not even move in the attempt. The sigh of the Winthrop supporters became more audible as the umpire called out "Forty love!" Will's face was set and the grip of his hand upon his racquet became firmer, but otherwise he showed no signs of confusion. He was watching his contestant keenly, but despite his earnestness the first ball that was served he drove viciously into the net.

There were shouts and the clapping of hands when the umpire said, "Game! Love game! First game for Alden!"

Will heard a slender fellow, evidently, from his colors, an Alden man, turn to a young lady seated beside him and say, "I guess that is stinging them some! Love game and not one service returned!"

The words caused Will's cheeks to flush slightly, but there was no trembling when he received the balls and prepared to serve. He had been watching his opponent and believed he had discovered some points he might use. His own service was not especially swift, though there was a "cut" in the ball which had proved very puzzling to some of his rivals in Winthrop. Whether or not it would avail with this man was a question that only a test could prove.

The ball was quickly returned, and so active were the men that it flew back and forth over the net more than a dozen times before it was at last sent by the Alden player to a corner of the court where Will was unable to reach it, and, indeed, he made no attempt when he perceived its uselessness.

"Love fifteen," shouted the umpire.

Will had almost ceased to be aware of the presence of the spectators. His attention was absorbed in watching the cat-like movements of the Alden player, whose agility certainly was marvelous. For the second time Will prepared to serve, and his first ball was promptly declared to be "outside." When the next ball followed the exact course of its predecessor

and the score became "love thirty" the despondency of the Winthrop supporters became almost as great as the elation of the Alden crowd.

Again Will served, this time swiftly, but the ball was promptly returned and there was another long series of returns which finally ended in Will securing the point. "Fifteen thirty," called the umpire, and the applause of the Winthrop supporters instantly became vociferous. Again Will Phelps heard the Alden youth remark to his companion, "Great, isn't it? Don't wonder the Winthrop fellows are wild! They have won one point out of eight. If they keep it up they will be happy!"

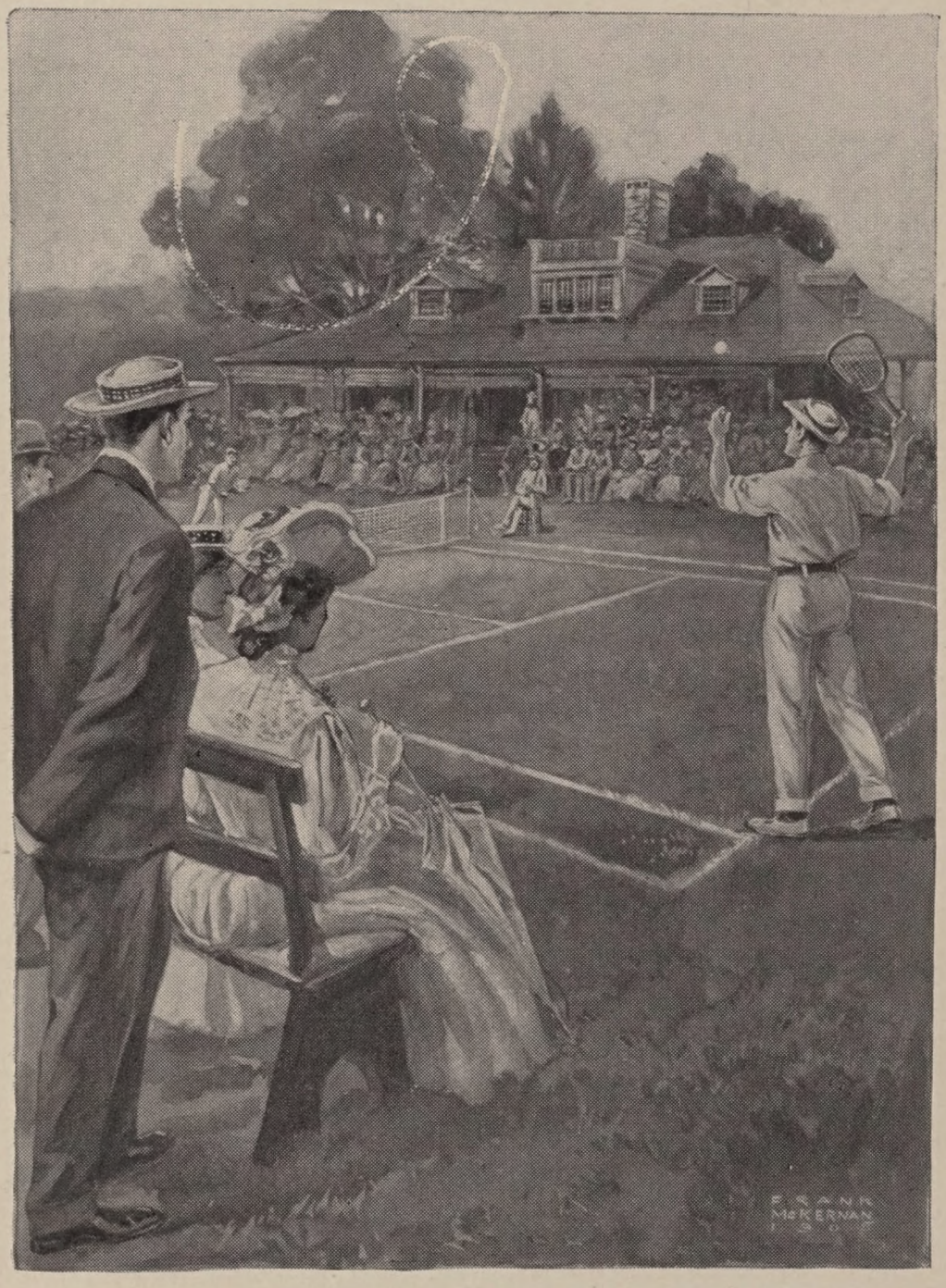
Will's teeth came firmly together and he glanced about over the assembly for the first time since the game had begun. He could see Miss Stone standing in front of her chair and watching him eagerly. Foster was beside her and his face too was a study. Near them was Doctor Brown, and his interest in the contest was plainly as keen as that of any one present. Will's heart throbbed as he turned to make his next play. He realized how much was expected of him, and the determination to increase his efforts became stronger.

His service for the first time seemed to puzzle the Alden player, for he had darted quickly forward as Will's racquet struck the ball, but the ball had bounded away from him and he had been unable to reach it. He swung his racquet angrily as he turned and walked back to his position, while the applause

of Winthrop seemed to annoy him slightly. Will was aware, however, that all this meant only the need of greater caution on his own part, and he was slow as he served the next ball. This was swiftly returned, only to be sent back by Will to the extreme corner of the court, but the agility of the Alden player was marvelous, and he sent the ball back again with a stroke that brought forth the applause of all the spectators. His main purpose seemed to be to make a swift return, while Will, cool now and collected, played to make his competitor work. First in the rear of the court and then near the net he sent the ball, compelling his opponent to exert himself to the utmost as he raced back and forth. His efforts, however, seemed to avail but little, for the next two points were won by his opponent, and the score stood two to nothing in games in Alden's favor.

When it once more came Will's turn to receive he stepped farther back, and as the swift ball came toward him he returned it neatly, placing it just beyond the other man's reach in the back part of the court. A second attempt met with a similar success, and then Will "lobbed" and lost three points. There was an unusually long contest over the final point, but Alden won it at last and the score was three to nothing in her favor.

In the fourth game Will repeated his tactics and won, but the next three games, though more fiercely fought, were won by Alden, and the first set ended by the score of six to one.



"When it once more came Will's turn to receive he stepped farther back."
Page 258.

There was no interval before the second set was begun. Will was playing with caution and was satisfied that he was compelling his opponent to work much more than he himself was. His own strength he was husbanding as much as was possible. Every game was long-drawn-out, and though the Alden player won the second set also, the score many a time had been deuce, and when the set was ended it was evident to all that the endurance of the man was being sorely tried. Only one more set, however, was required by him to win the contest; and that his opponent might have endurance to be able to play that successfully, Will greatly feared.

"What do you say, Mr. Phelps?" said his opponent as he approached the net. "Shall we take a little breathing spell before we go on?"

"I don't care for it myself," laughed Will. "If you want it I'm willing."

"It can't be done!" said the umpire quickly. "It's against the rules."

"All right. I'm ready, then," said the Alden player, dancing back to his position. "I didn't know but Mr. Phelps was tired."

"I'm just preparing to begin," retorted Will with a laugh. "Ready!" And with a swift stroke he sent the ball into his opponent's court. He could hear the Alden spectator, whose former words he had heard, say, "It's all over but the shouting. I really thought the Winthrop fellow could play a little from the reports, but we've got five freshmen who could do

him up. Look at that, will you!" he added as the representative of his college stooped low and "scooped" the ball which Will had served and sent it over Will's head and yet within the court.

There was a protest on the part of some of the spectators, who noisily declared that the ball had not been returned upon its first bound. The game was delayed a few minutes and the dispute waxed warm until Will advanced and said, "It's all right, Mr. Umpire, I haven't protested. Let it go."

"Very well," replied the relieved official. "Love fifteen."

There was an expression of determination in the eyes of the Alden player as he quickly faced Will, but the face of the Winthrop player did not betray any change. He was playing the same steady game that had been his from the start, and a feeling of intense relief came to him when he won the third set by the score of eleven to nine. It had been desperately fought and both players were showing the effect of the struggle when it came to an end, though it was manifest to all that the Alden man was laboring harder than his opponent.

The next set fell to Will with a score of seven to five. The delight of the Winthrop supporters broke forth in songs, and Will turned to glance at the Alden youth who had so confidently predicted the speedy downfall of Winthrop. He could see that he was troubled, for the expression of his face had changed and he was no longer talking to the young lady by his

side. Will Phelps repressed the smile that rose to his lips and turned to the game once more, aware that it still was too early to prophesy the outcome.

The Alden player roused himself and won the next game, and then the two that followed were won by Will. Again the Alden player, his face almost purple from his exertions and his hair as wet as if he had been plunged in water, responded to the appeals of his fellows and won.

"Deuce," whispered the now excited assembly. No one was seated now, and all were crowding close to the lines. Miss Stone was in the front row, and as Will observed her excitement and saw her nod her head two or three times very decidedly at him, he laughed and swung himself about on his heel as if new life had been given him. The unexpected endurance of the Alden player was somewhat disconcerting, and Will's respect for his skill was even stronger than when the game had begun. He certainly was a brilliant player, abounding in strokes that brought the spectators to their feet with shouts of approval, and Will Phelps clearly understood that he himself might lose through one of these startling strokes of his opponent. It was brilliancy against steadiness, he assured himself, and, come what might, he must hold himself under control to the very end.

The bitterness of defeat crept into his heart when the next game went to Alden. The applause of his opponent's supporters and the noisy plaudits of his own friends, who were striving to put heart into their

representative, sounded but faintly in his ears. His tongue was dry and his mouth seemed parched. Resolutely he faced his adversary, and as he watched him it seemed to Will that he himself was the fresher of the two. He decided to play a swift game, and his spirits rose when the set went to him. The advantage was on his side, and grimly he decided that he would exert himself as never he had before. If he could only win this game! He was thinking less of his own success than of what it would mean to the college if he should win. And this one game might decide.

Evidently the Alden man was of a similar mind, for he threw himself desperately into the game and won it, so that once more the players were on even terms. The shouts and songs of the spectators redoubled, but Will was aware only of the Alden youth who had so confidently predicted the downfall of Winthrop. His face was almost livid, but he was silent, and Will smiled with satisfaction.

The game that followed was another that was long-drawn-out, but as it went to Will by a score of nine to seven he was content and determined desperately to make the coming game his if careful playing would win. He resolved to change his method of playing again, but the first point, amidst great excitement, went to Alden. Still, he was determined to continue, and the next three points were his own. Only one point now remained between him and victory. Not a sound could be heard from the spectators. Grimly the two players faced each other, ready to take advan-

tage of any slip. Carefully Will served the ball and carefully his opponent returned it. Brilliant plays were not to be thought of now. With every ball that safely sped over the net and landed within the lines a sigh of relief escaped the lips of the players' supporters. Will's eyes never left his opponent's movements. With great care he had by his returns drawn him nearer the net, and yet he knew he must not draw him too near, for a "slam" might be destructive. Three times he had returned the ball, each successive time succeeding in luring the man on. Then suddenly, and he never could explain just how it occurred, he raised his racquet, smote the ball with all his strength, and sent it swiftly down the court close to the lines. His adversary leaped for it, stretched forth his hand unavailingly, dropped his arm and, looking down upon the ground, shook his head, for the contest was ended and Winthrop had won.

CHAPTER XXVII

THE DOUBLES

HARDLY aware of the din that followed his last stroke, a smile for a moment spread over the face of Will Phelps and then it quickly vanished. Quietly he stepped forward to the net and grasped the outstretched hand of his opponent. The keen disappointment of the Alden player could not be entirely concealed, but his words were cordial as he said:

"I congratulate you, Mr. Phelps, with all my heart."

"Thank you," responded Will warmly. "You made me work for it."

"I certainly tried to."

"If you had succeeded in the game as well as in that particular I should be the one to congratulate you," laughed Will. "You certainly did put up a great game."

"The more honor, then, to you."

"That wasn't a very modest remark of mine, was it?" said Will. "But you know what I meant. Of course, I'm glad I won, but I honestly am sorry that my winning has cut you out from a chance for the second cup."

"First or nothing for me, thank you."

Will turned about, for his fellow-students were now upon him in full force. His hand was shaken till it seemed to him that it was almost numb. The praise, however, was sweet, and Will was learning the meaning of the proverb that "nothing succeeds like success." He was a hero in the eyes of his fellows, and the recognition of his winning for a time was the overmastering thought in his mind. The crowd was dispersing, some going to the other courts to watch the contests there, and others turning into the street that led back to the colleges. Will had donned his sweater, and as he perceived Miss Stone and Mott talking to Doctor Brown not far away, he at once joined them.

There was a vague feeling of uneasiness in his mind when Mott turned away at his approach and without a word started for the near-by court apparently to watch the game that was in progress there. Disguising the feeling, however, Will listened to the enthusiastic words of Miss Stone and the more quietly spoken praise which the young professor gave him.

"It isn't ended yet," laughed Will lightly. "I have two others to play, you know."

"You'll win them! You must win them both!" said Miss Stone.

"I shall try."

Doctor Brown smiled but did not speak as he turned away, and Will and his companion joined the assembly that was watching one of the other games. Will was silent for a time as he carefully observed

the style of play of the man who was in the lead. An expression of satisfaction appeared in his face which Miss Stone was quick to see.

"You think you can win from him?" she inquired in a low voice.

"I can tell later."

"I can tell now. I am sure you can do it."

Her confidence was inspiring, but Will did not reply.

"I read your story last night," said Miss Stone.

"Did you?" inquired Will eagerly, looking up as she spoke.

"Yes. Don't you want my opinion of it?"

"I most certainly do."

"I think it is good. It is more than good. It is excellent."

"You really think so?"

"My friends often inform me that I am not given to flattery."

"I know you are not. That was one reason why I wanted you to see it. It really is as much yours as mine, you know."

"I merely made suggestions. You carried them out. You made me feel that the walls of that old house were speaking to me and describing some of the scenes they had witnessed. It was a poem in prose."

Will's heart was light in spite of a particularly brilliant stroke of the winning player. He had written of the forsaken ruined house where Miss Stone

had met with her mishap in the preceding autumn. He had pictured the scenes and struggles of the earlier days, described the life of its possible inmates, the loneliness of the deserted homestead, and when he had been writing there had been visible to him not only in imagination what might have occurred in the earlier days but what had actually occurred in his own experiences in the place.

"Would you publish it? I mean," he added hastily and in some confusion, "would you give some magazine the opportunity to increase its sale and enlarge its influence by being permitted to use it?"

"I certainly should."

"I had thought of letting Doctor Brown read it," suggested Will.

"Don't do it."

"Why not?"

The girl hesitated a moment. "I can't just tell you why, but I shouldn't do it. Keep the manuscript awhile if you want to, and go over it again and again, but don't tell a soul about it. If I am mistaken, and no one wants it, then no harm has been done. If it is really good, as I think it is, then the surprise and pleasure of those who may read it for the first time in the magazine will be all the greater, and the more honor you will have, Mr. Phelps."

Will made no reply, for the contest they had been watching was ended. Mott came to claim his cousin, and in her presence he spoke to Will, but made no reference to the defeat of the Alden player. The Win-

throp representative apparently ignored the freshman and at once returned to his rooms, which were not far from the court. Before he changed his clothing he went to his desk, took out the manuscript from his pocket, for Miss Stone had given it back to him, directed an envelope to the editors of the "Mogul Magazine," and quickly set forth for the post office, to whose care the letter was committed.

Then Will returned to his room, and when he had taken his bath and arrayed himself in another suit of flannel, threw himself upon his bed. In a few minutes Foster came bounding into the room and, as he perceived his friend, he exclaimed hastily, "What's the trouble, Will? Sick?"

"Not a bit. I'm just giving my nerves a chance to recuperate. Let's see, it's six less beats to a minute, isn't it, that a fellow's heart makes when he is lying down than when he is standing up? I learned that when I was on the track team. It's a matter of nerve almost as much as of muscle, and if you give your nerves a chance to pick up, they'll stand by you all the better."

"That's right. It's a pity, Will, you aren't on the track team this year."

"Hardly," laughed Will. "There's a good deal in a fellow finding out what he can't do as well as what he can, and acting accordingly."

"But you made your 'W.' in freshman year, Will," protested Foster.

"Yes, I happened to."

"You didn't 'happen' to; you worked for it and won it."

"Well, perhaps I did. But I couldn't give it the time this year. I don't believe in a fellow going in unless he goes in for all he is worth."

"You puzzle me. You take up one thing and work it hard, and then you drop it and take up something else. I have to stick to one thing."

"That's the way to do, old man. You made the track team in your freshman year, and are on it this spring. Next year you'll be captain."

"Nonsense."

"You'll see. I couldn't keep on with three things. I had to drop something, so I thought I'd let the track team go. I'd got my 'W.' by it."

"You ought to think of the college as well as of yourself, Will." Foster spoke eagerly, for his heart was centered on the work of the track team.

"I did, Foster. I did, honestly. If there hadn't been any other sprinters I'd have dropped the tennis and stuck to the team. But there are three or four men, all in the same class. Any one has just as good a chance as the others. Now, in tennis, you see——"

"Oh, yes, I see," interrupted Foster. "It may be all right, but I wish you had gone in for the track team, all the same. What was the third thing, Will? You said there were three."

"Did I? Oh, well, the track team was one, tennis made two, and the third—well, I guess I won't mention the third."

"You don't have to. I think we all can guess."

"What is it?"

"We'll ask Miss Stone if we can't find out any other way."

"You're away off, old man!" exclaimed Will warmly, his face flushing as he spoke.

"Am I? All right, then, I am. You play this afternoon, Will?"

"Yes. They're rushing the games. I wish it was over," said Will dejectedly.

"What? After beating Alden?"

"That's just it. All the fellows expect me to take the cup now just because I did win from Alden. No man knows what sort of a proposition I may run up against to-day or to-morrow."

"There! There!" laughed Foster. "Keep your nerve. You're all right and you know it. Hold on, Will; I'm going to read you something I found to-day." And as his friend did not protest, Foster read aloud a rather pleasing story he had found in one of the current magazines. For a time it served the purpose in his mind of keeping his room-mate's thoughts from the coming contests. How well his work succeeded he soon discovered from the sounds that came from the bed, on which Will Phelps was fast asleep.

It may have been the sleep, or his skill, or the combination of both that aided Will Phelps that afternoon and on the following morning, for his opponents were unable to stand before him, and in the

semi-finals and finals he won easily. Winthrop had, therefore, won in the singles, and the enthusiasm was great.

The interest then centered in the coming contests in doubles. The misgivings in Will's heart were not removed by his companion player, for Mott still maintained his air of indifference when he and Will stood ready to begin their first game. They had drawn as opponents the weakest team—at least it was so looked upon in the list—and yet though Winthrop won the game, it was by such a small margin that the fears of her supporters had several times been greatly wrought up. There had been no open display on Mott's part of any deliberate intention to "throw" the game, but he had repeatedly disregarded the suggestions of his comrade and appeared to be intent only upon displaying his own skill, apparently being unmindful of all team work.

Will, who was weary when the sets for the day were ended, and his nerves tingling, did not know that it was the time of all times in which he ought to "set a watch upon the door of his lips." He was irritated and angry, and when the crowd had departed he put his racquet in its case, and going over to Mott said gruffly, "Mott, I want you to come with me."

There was malice or alarm in the freshman's eyes as he looked up into Will's face, but he made no protest, and obediently walked beside the junior as together they departed from the grounds.

"Look here, Mott," said Will brusquely, "I'm not satisfied with the way you played this morning."

"Aren't you, Mr. Phelps?" Mott's voice was low, but to Will's imagination it seemed as if there was a touch of malice in it.

"No, I'm not. Will you brace up or not?"

"One cannot do better than his best."

"Sometimes one doesn't do his best."

"You think I didn't?"

"That's just what I think."

"Perhaps you'll tell me why I didn't." The expression upon the freshman's face had not changed and his voice was still low.

"There's a reason for everything, and so there must be one for this."

"Please tell me what it is, Mr. Phelps."

"You know it as well—better than I."

"I'll tell you one thing, Mr. Phelps. I'm done."

"What do you mean?"

"Just what I say. I'll not play another game with you."

"Yes, you will!" exclaimed Will, who now had lost control of himself. "Yes, you will, and you will do well too, or the whole college will know what only you and I and one other fellow know now."

Mott's face was turned full upon Will, but there still was no change in its expression. "Is that what you wanted to say to me, Mr. Phelps?"

"Yes."

Mott made no response, nor did Will speak again

before the freshman turned and went alone up the street. There were misgivings in Will's thoughts as he entered his room. He had indirectly charged the freshman, if not directly, with throwing the game. Perhaps he had done wrong, but he tried to persuade himself that heroic measures were required and he could do no other. He was confident, however, that his words would prove effective and Mott would do better in the coming contest of the afternoon. And with this thought in his mind he came to the grounds at half-past two o'clock, when the games were to be resumed.

As he stood in the assembly, Miss Stone came hurriedly forward and handed Will a note. Ignoring the anxiety she displayed, he tore open the letter and in a moment looked up in blank dismay.

CHAPTER XXVIII

AN UNEXPECTED LETTER

"WHAT does this mean?" demanded Will almost fiercely.

The young lady looked at him for a moment as if she were too surprised to reply. Her face colored slightly as she said quietly, "I do not know, Mr. Phelps. Alfred wanted me to give you the note, and I have done so."

"I beg your pardon," responded Will humbly. "I spoke as I ought not to, but—but, Miss Stone, do you know what is in this—this note?"

"I have not seen it."

"Where is Mott now?"

"He was in the house when I left."

"Please read that, Miss Stone," said Will, as he held forth the letter.

"Is it something I ought to see?" she inquired, hesitating for a moment.

"Indeed it is. I want you to see it, anyway."

The girl took the envelope and, removing its contents, read on a little slip of paper these words:

I hereby certify that Alfred Mott is suffering from a sprained ankle, and by my directions he will not attempt to play in the tennis games for several days to come. GEORGE W. JENKINS, M. D.

Will watched Miss Stone's face closely, and the expression of surprise that crept over it as she read, clearly indicated that she had no previous knowledge of the "mishap" that had befallen her cousin.

"It is too bad," she said slowly, as she handed the paper back to him. "What will you do now?"

Will smiled a little bitterly as he said, "I confess I am not surprised, for he gave me warning of this very thing last night. At first I was all upset, but I'll have to do the best I can. Nobody yet ever heard me whine."

He turned away somewhat abruptly, and so did not perceive the expression of trouble and perplexity which followed him. Quickly he sought out the manager and showed the physician's certificate to him. There was a hasty consultation, and then it was decided that Bonnett, who was the first substitute of the team, should take Mott's place.

The change of players and perhaps also the feeling of indignation in the heart of Will Phelps, for he had no sympathy with Mott in his "accident," did not add to the effectiveness of the work in the doubles. Bonnett lunged and leaped and struck the ball so vigorously that it was sent far outside the lines more frequently than it landed within the court, and when the semi-finals had been played the Winthrop team was among the losers.

The sting of defeat was always exceedingly difficult for Will to bear, but there was a measure of relief in the feeling among the students that he had success-

fully upheld the honor of the college by winning the singles, and that the failure to do better in the doubles was entirely due to the substitution which Mott's accident had compelled.

The interest in the games was mostly gone now for Will, and after he had watched the finals till it was evident to all that Alden would win, he turned away from the courts and joined Miss Stone, who had started down the street.

"I'm going down to see Mott," said Will. "He'll want to hear how the games came out."

"I wish you would tell me what the trouble is, Mr. Phelps."

"What trouble?"

"The trouble with Alfred."

"Doctor Jenkins declared it to be a sprained ankle."

"That isn't what I mean."

Will's face clouded for a moment, and then he said, endeavoring to speak lightly, "I'm afraid I can't do that."

"Do you know?"

How persistent the girl was. Will did not speak for a moment. He was thinking of the time when he had taken her to the foot-ball game with Alden, and how Mott had "explained" the points of the game to her. A smile crept over his face as he thought of her confidence and how she had described the "touchdown" and the "wayback" and how the men ran with the goal. What a different impression

she had made then as contrasted with his later knowledge of her. How quiet she had been when she had fallen into the old well. And how sensible her criticisms of his literary work had been. She was a friend worth having, he thought.

"Was it something I don't need to trouble myself about?" she inquired eagerly, as she saw the light in his eyes.

Will's first impression was that it was best not to let this warm-hearted girl trouble herself over the shortcomings of her graceless young cousin. Why should she know? A second thought, and the more generous one, was that there was no one who could do for Mott what she herself could do. He himself, in spite of his loss of confidence in the freshman, still believed the fellow not to be altogether bad, and even then he recalled what Miss Stone had told him of the surroundings and influences Mott had. It would be hard for her, and yet would she herself not want to know?

The more generous impulse prevailed, and he said soberly, "Miss Stone, there is something, but I can't explain it to you."

"Why not?" she demanded quickly.

"There has been a break between Mott and myself, and the reason for it—perhaps he has said something to you about it?" he broke in.

"Not a word. He still sings your praises."

"He does?" said Will in surprise.

"He certainly does. I could see that you thought

there was something wrong, but he hasn't said a word about that or any change in his relations with you. Of course, that night when you spoke of the man who purposely made Winthrop lose the basket-ball game I saw you were troubled and suspicious, and at first I was indignant. Since then I have been more troubled than angry, and I knew you were not altogether surprised that he should have had the misfortune to sprain his ankle before the games in the doubles were ended. Will you tell me why, Mr. Phelps?"

"I can't do that," replied Will, shaking his head. "You know I can't. It wouldn't be fair to Mott. But I'll tell you what will be better yet. At least I believe it will."

"What's that?"

"For you to ask Mott about it yourself. If he wants to explain some things to you it will be all right."

"And I can then tell you?"

"Yes, if you think it best—and Mott agrees."

"What creatures you men are!" said Miss Stone thoughtfully. "You stand by your worst enemy if some one else tries to harm him."

"Mott isn't my worst enemy.'

"I was not thinking of him. You have lost confidence in him, I can see that very plainly——" She paused as if to give Will an opportunity to deny, but he did not speak, and she continued, "You have lost confidence in Alfred. I know you have. You don't

say so, but you can't hide it. Yet when I ask you why, you answer me never a word."

"Ask Mott," suggested Will, with a smile.

"That's just what I'm going to do," she replied decisively. "And I hope, Mr. Phelps, that I shall be able to explain it all to you so that you and he will be good friends again. He has such a feeling of admiration for you! Why, do you know, I think he believes that man may have been made a little lower than the angels, but that in your case it was but a very little lower." The demure expression of her mouth and her words of praise caused Will to laugh, for this was the one line that never failed to rouse him. He was no braggart, he certainly was not aggressively self-assertive, but his imagination was keen and his impulses strong, so that any praise he chanced to receive always acted like a stimulant upon him.

"I wish others had the same opinion of me." He looked down upon her as he spoke.

She laughed and said, "It's a great deal better for you that they don't see any signs of the angelic. Not the slightest."

"Oh, well, it's better to be a man than an angel. In fact, I can't ever think of a man as being an angel, anyway. It's always a wo——"

"It's better to be a man before he's an angel, anyway," interrupted the girl.

"Doesn't the Bible tell of men and angels? Doesn't that show that only one part of humanity can ever hope to become angelic?"

"That reminds me of something my pastor told me the other day about a good woman in our church and the way she interpreted the Bible. She had a boy, and, like all parents, she couldn't be an honest judge of her own child——"

"Do you believe that?" interrupted Will.

"Most assuredly I do. Parents simply can't be candid about their own children. They are prejudiced by the very fact that they are the parents. Well, this poor woman wanted her boy to become a preacher, and she was so persistent about it that finally in all kindness Doctor Brigham was compelled to tell her frankly that the boy lacked the capacity. Now what do you suppose she said?"

"I can't imagine."

"Why, she said 'she had read her Bible through a great many times and she had never seen anywhere in it the command that a minister must have capacity, and she always took the Bible for just what it said. She knew her boy wasn't very bright, but it didn't say brightness was necessary.'"

"And do you mean to infer that when I spoke of 'men and angels' I was quoting a good deal as this woman did?" said Will laughingly.

"I'm afraid you are not the only one," she answered soberly. "It means so much to me that I can't bear to have any one take the husks and leave the kernel."

They had now arrived at the house, and upon Miss Stone's invitation Will entered and went with her up

to the room where Mott had been staying that morning. They found him seated in a chair, with his foot bound and swathed upon a foot-rest in front of him. The freshman greeted his visitors quietly, but did not even refer to his failure to appear or inquire as to the winners in the doubles.

When Will departed he was more perplexed than ever he had been by the freshman, who sometimes drew and sometimes repelled him. What Miss Stone had told him of his feelings and expressions concerning the junior whom he had so greatly admired in the earlier part of the year touched Will strangely, and yet he could not reconcile these with some of his own observations.

The mystery was not cleared either, by any report which Miss Stone made. If she had spoken to Mott concerning the estrangement she did not refer to anything that had been said, and when she departed for home she left Will even more puzzled. Kindly, frank, evidently friendly she had been to him, but not a word did she speak about the subject that apparently had been so dear to her heart.

As for Mott, Will seldom saw him. He recovered from his accident so rapidly that Will's suspicions were confirmed rather than relieved. But the junior year soon drew to a close. Miss Stone returned for the commencement exercises, and Will saw much of her while she was in Winthrop, but Mott was a topic that by common consent was tabooed.

In the summer vacation Will had persuaded his

father and mother to go for the month of August to a quiet resort on the shores of Lake George. The fact that Miss Stone was spending the summer in the same place apparently was not a surprise to Will Phelps, and that Mott should be there too did not startle him.

There were picnics and excursions of various kinds, so that the summer days were all filled. One morning, when the month of August was well advanced, Will had stopped for his mail at the office as he was about to join Miss Stone in his canoe. His double paddle was in his hand as he stood opening the missive he had received, which was written in a hand that seemed very familiar. He tore open the envelope, and his face beamed and his heart began to beat rapidly as he read the following brief letter.

WINTHROP, Aug. 25th.

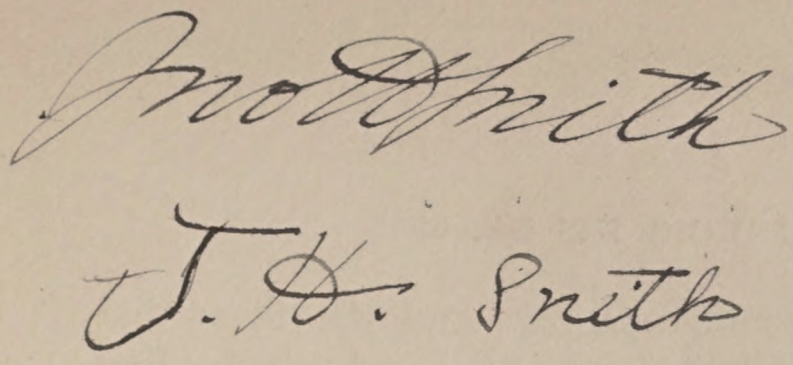
MY DEAR PHELPS:

As you will note by the heading, I am still in Winthrop—planning and perhaps plotting for the incoming seniors. I cannot forego the pleasure, however, in the midst of my busy-ness, of writing to congratulate you on your article in the September "Mogul Magazine." I have enjoyed it, every word. Perhaps I should not call your conception a new one, but it is fresh, which is even better.

Sincerely,

PAUL E. BROWN.

As Will glanced up from the letter he perceived Miss Stone approaching, and in her hand was a copy of the "Mogul Magazine."



CHAPTER XXIX

A CALL BY BONNETT

THERE was an expression of deep interest on Miss Stone's face, and mingled with it was a smile of amusement as she perceived how excited Will was, as she greeted him on his approach.

"I thought it would be a good thing to take a magazine along with us in our canoe this morning," she said demurely.

"Have you seen it? How did you know? Who told you? Let me see it, please!" replied Will excitedly. "I wonder if there are any for sale in the hotel," he hastily added as he started quickly toward the news-stand.

"Here is a copy. You don't need to buy any more."

But Will was too strongly aroused to heed her words. He found four copies on the stand, and at once purchased them all. With the bundle in his hands he hastily rejoined his friend, and immediately they seated themselves on a sofa in the reception room and began to pore over the pages.

It certainly seemed to Will Phelps as if it was the crowning moment of his life. The familiar expressions he had used, and over which he had toiled with such care, took on a fresh meaning as they stared at

him from the printed pages. And the fame that would be his! Unconsciously he thought of the lists of names he had seen on the pages of the "Mogul Magazine," and now his was among them! And the article would be seen and read by his friends. How glad he was that he had kept the matter almost a secret, for the reward now was the greater. The poem on the "rounded, rolling orb" was flat and stale. What a mercy it was that the editors had had sufficient foresight to return it to him. It would have mortified him beyond the power of expression to have had it accepted and used. This, however, was worth while. This was a start of which he might justly be proud. His eyes sparkled and the brightness of the shining waters of the lake were to him but the reflection of his own feelings. Life was glorious and all things had conspired to make him happy.

Suddenly he sprang to his feet and exclaimed, "Excuse me a moment, Miss Stone. I must run to tell my father and mother about it."

"They are on the corner of the piazza. I saw them there as I came past them. I wanted to tell them myself, but wasn't I good to resist the temptation? I knew you would want to tell them yourself."

As Will darted from the room with the copies of the magazine in his hands he did not glance behind him, but when he returned, ten minutes later, there was a softened expression in his face. His enthusiasm was as marked as ever, but the interview with his father had produced an effect not there before.

"Out in the canoe . . . the interest of either did not flag."
Page 285.

"I'm all ready now," he said quickly. "We'll start if you are ready too."

Out in the canoe, the article in the "Mogul Magazine" still continued to be the topic of conversation, and apparently the interest of either did not flag.

"I should have thought they'd have written me that they had accepted it," said Will, when at last they turned toward the shore.

"Very likely they did. The letter may have gone to Winthrop and was not forwarded."

"That's so. I hadn't thought of that. I'll write the postmaster the first thing. I shouldn't want that——"

"That cheque?" laughingly interrupted Miss Stone.

"Yes, if you want to know," acknowledged Will. "How much do you suppose it will be?"

"I haven't the slightest idea. You'd have written it whether you got anything for it or not, wouldn't you?" she inquired seriously.

"I certainly should. I had to write it. But all the same, I am interested in what they consider it worth. It will be the first money I ever earned in all my life. I'd like to know what it will be."

"It won't be enough to retire on," laughed the girl.

"'Retire'? Who's talking about retiring, I'd like to know? I have just begun."

They were at the dock by this time, and when they returned to the hotel Will perceived that Mott, who was seated on the steps, had a copy of the "Mogul"

in his hands and was busily reading. Will smiled a trifle self-consciously as he saw what the freshman (sophomore he now was, for Mott had successfully passed his examinations) was doing. It would have been a pleasure to stop and ask his opinion of the article, but the coolness between them was too pronounced for him to venture to do that, and so he passed on to his room.

For several days the success of the young Winthrop senior was a topic of conversation among the guests of the hotel, but it soon ceased to be a matter of interest except to Will and his immediate family and friends, and then was dropped. There was a feeling of resentment in Will's heart at the light manner in which his serious work had been received, but the reaction was but natural and he seldom referred to the matter.

There was a revival of interest in a measure for him when a letter came which had been forwarded from Winthrop in response to his request. He tore it open with trembling hands, and when the pink slip which has been inclosed fell to the ground he pounced upon it with trembling hands.

One hundred dollars! The amount, which hitherto in the generous treatment he had received from his father, now assumed large proportions. And he had earned it. Who said that literary men were always poverty-stricken? He entered upon a rapid calculation in his thoughts. He might be able to write one article every month. But would the "Mogul" accept

one monthly? There had been nothing in the formal and printed note he had received which even barely hinted at a longing on the part of the editors to receive anything more from his pen. The momentary reaction, however, speedily passed and the feeling of deep satisfaction returned.

Repeatedly during the remaining days of vacation, when he was alone in his room, he drew forth the magazine and read and re-read his article, every time with deep satisfaction. The praise his father had given him had been sweet, the sublime confidence of his mother, who declared "she had known all the time that her boy could do anything he tried to do," he had laughingly received as a matter of course, and the letters of congratulation that had been received were all a source of pleasure.

Perhaps when he returned to Winthrop he was somewhat disappointed that he was not more generally recognized as the man who had had an article in the "Mogul Magazine" when he was only a junior in college, but he wisely kept his feelings to himself, and if his pride had been hurt no one discovered it from any word or act of his.

The work of senior year was largely a continuation of that of the junior year. Will explained to his room-mate that in his freshman year by solving the problem of Splinter he had mastered the work of the first two years. So by the inspiration of Doctor Brown he had gained the solution of the problem of the upper-classman. And yet Will Phelps, though he

did his work in general in such a manner as to escape criticism and to "pass," was doing his utmost only in history. To this his own tastes drew him, but he nevertheless was aware that it was a desire to show the young professor that his smarting words had not been entirely deserved that held him steadily to his task. His candid criticisms Will sometimes laughingly compared to the whip that produced an increased speed in a horse, but, whatever the cause, he was doing his utmost in this one department, and the feeling of satisfaction became stronger with the passing days as he realized that his labor was producing something more than a mere "showy" recitation, as Doctor Brown had so brutally hinted at the beginning of junior year.

Mott he saw seldom. The sophomore still avoided him and all the adoration of the former days seemed to be gone. Tales came to him of the diligence of Mott in visiting the members of the incoming class, "for their own good," as Mott expressly declared upon the occasion of such visits, but Will was too busy to give the reports much attention.

The first real excitement of senior year came with the election of the class officers. The honors of this year were the greatest in their line of the course, and the eagerness with which preparations were made steadily increased. It was, therefore, with no surprise that Will received a call from Bonnett one night when Foster had left town for the evening.

"I came over to talk with you about the election,

Phelps," said Bonnett, after a few preliminary words had been spoken.

"Yes?" responded Will, glancing keenly at his visitor.

"Are you willing to go in and help?"

"Tell me straight just what you want, Bonnett."

"I think the North Hall crowd would like to see Clark elected class president," suggested Bonnett.

"I haven't any question as to that," laughed Will. "I wouldn't exclude Clark, either."

"Will you go in for him?"

"What's your slate?" demanded Will.

"I haven't any slate, as you call it."

"Call it what you please. What is the list of names you've made out?"

"Why, we thought if Clark should be elected president and you and your crowd would go in for him—you know it was by their votes you were elected last year——"

"I don't know any such thing!" interrupted Will warmly. "I didn't make any bargain."

"No. No. Of course you didn't. I was only speaking of the fact that those fellows all voted for you."

"Who's your man for vice-president?"

"Foster. Foster Bennett."

"Why not make him president?"

"One of your men president in junior year and another in senior?" said Bonnett with a smile. "You can see yourself that wouldn't do."

"Why not? It's the man and not the fraternity you're after, isn't it?"

"Yes. Yes. Of course. Still, you have to recognize——"

"No, I don't have to 'recognize.' As between Clark and Foster, Bonnett, you know me well enough to know whom I shall vote for. I'll tell you right now that as long as water runs and fire burns I'll never vote for Clark to be president of the best class that ever entered Old Winthrop, especially in senior year, when it means so much."

"You mean that, do you?"

"Mean it? Of course I mean it, and every word of it too!"

"Then there's only one thing to be done."

"What's that?"

"To re-elect you."

Startled as Will was by the suggestion, he threw back his head and laughed. "Bonnett, why can't you leave these things alone? What do you want to have a finger in every pie for? You know it's out of the question."

"I know it isn't out of the question," said Bonnett slowly. "You can have it if you will say the word and——"

"And what?"

"And say nothing. Honestly, Will, I don't want to have my finger in any pie, certainly not in every pie, as you so kindly suggest. But just suppose no one goes ahead and does any planning? Suppose it's all

left to chance? Why, there won't be any 'chance' about it in that case, and you know it. The first thing we know some gawk will be run in, and what a fine show we'll make on class day!"

There was an element of truth in what Bonnett was saying, as Will was compelled to acknowledge to himself. The argument was specious and the proposal was certainly tempting. To be re-elected president—why, it was almost unheard of in the annals of Winthrop! And he was reasonably convinced too, that Bonnett's suggestion was not entirely impossible.

"Say the word," suggested Bonnett, who had been keenly watching Will during the brief interval of silence.

"I'll tell you, Bonnett——" Will suddenly ceased speaking as Clark, unannounced, entered the room. The man was a bore, but Will repressed his feeling of irritation at the unexpected and undesired entrance of his visitor.

"Sit down, Clark," he said, pushing a chair toward the senior.

The visitor complied, and Bonnett, making a wry face, arose. "I'll see you again, Will. Think over the matter, will you?"

Clark smiled blandly upon his classmates, but retained his seat, and Bonnett at once departed.

"Say, Phelps," began Clark, when they were left to themselves, "what did Bonnett want?"

Will swallowed twice and then said quietly, "You'll have to ask him, Clark."

"I will. I didn't know but he was talking about the class elections." He waited a moment to give Will an opportunity to respond, but his host seemed to be unmindful of his privilege and Clark resumed. "That's what I came for."

"You did? That's kind of you," laughed Will, though he was deeply annoyed.

"Yes. The Y. M. C. A. elections come off to-morrow night."

"Do they?"

"Yes."

"That's the night before the election of class officers."

"That's so. But they won't interfere," said Clark glibly. "Thompson, who was elected president, you know, had to leave college, and the vice-president is no good."

"I thought Richardson was a good fellow."

"Oh, he's good enough. But the fellows want you."

"Want me? For what?"

"For president."

"Who wants me?"

"All the fellows. That's why I'm here."

Will looked at his visitor a moment in silence, and then with a laugh said, "And the election of the Y. M. C. A. officers comes off the night before our class election." And Will laughed again.

CHAPTER XXX

THE SENIOR CLASS ELECTIONS

"I DON'T see anything to laugh at," said Clark soberly. "The fellows have talked it over and that's the way they all feel about it. It's a great opportunity and a solemn responsibility, Phelps. You can't deny that." His classmate's somewhat dismal tones caused Will to laugh heartily. The idea of Clark manipulating elections was preposterous. The fellow was sincere and doubtless in earnest, but the complete lack in him of the ability to appreciate the humorous side of life and his undeveloped powers of imagination somehow combined to make him a bore. In spite of his natural prejudice, nevertheless, the word which Clark had used made a deep impression on Will. He had never been a very active member of the association, not because he was opposed so much as because of his lack of sympathy with the aims and methods of some of the members. When he had first entered college he had joined, but it had been more because of his father's suggestion than because he had felt especially drawn toward the body. Will even now did not realize that his father had advised him as he had chiefly because of his desire to have Will committed, in the early part of his course, to the better side of college life, and had

believed that in this way his boy would be saved from many a temptation, just because he was committed, and the student body would understand at once what his position was. Once a member, Will had been fairly active, though never a leader in the work, and Clark's suggestion, as a consequence, had been at Will's first thought almost a joke. The word "opportunity," however, had lodged in his mind and he was not able to shake himself free from it even after his classmate had departed without receiving any decisive reply from Will, who at first had laughed at the "joke," thinking that Clark might in this way be trying to prevent his re-election as class president.

"Opportunity." Was it really an opportunity? He had very decided convictions as to what the work of the association might be, and just because of that fact was Clark's suggestion anything in the line of a true opportunity? He strove to banish the thought from his mind by the assurance that it was only Clark himself who had spoken and that the members doubtless had other plans in mind and would never think of him for the position. He did not even go near the meeting, but was not surprised when that evening, after the meeting had adjourned, a committee came to him to inform him of his election as president.

Will thanked his visitors and then assured them that he would give them his decision within two days.

"But we ought to know now," protested Clark, who was a member of the committee. "You see, our class election is held to-morrow night."

"So I understand," replied Will dryly. "Do you really want my decision now?"

"Oh, no. No. No!" exclaimed Clark hastily. "Not in the least if it is to decline the honor."

A smile crept over the faces even of his fellow-committeemen at Clark's words, but Thorn, for whom Will entertained as deep a feeling of respect for his genuine manliness as for any one in college, and who was also a member of the committee, said hastily, "Take your time, Phelps. The truth is, we want you and we need you. Some things are not as—as we would like to have them; and there isn't a fellow who could straighten them out as you. I know how you feel and I think I know a little of what you are. We'd like to cut out all cant and gush, and get right down to the work of putting something into the Winthrop life that isn't here now. We want a little of the lion as well as the lamb. We want to appeal to the masculine side. We know all about the gentleness and meekness and sympathy and tenderness, but we want a little of the ruggedness of it too. Some of the fellows don't seem to understand that determination, and courage and nerve and strength are the qualities we want to help put into Winthrop, and we want some one who will command the respect of the whole college along these very lines. I tell you it's a great opportunity, Phelps!"

Again the word "opportunity." Will flinched almost as if he had been touched upon a sore spot in his body. He looked straight at Thorn and said,

"You're good to say what you have, old man, because I know you well enough to understand that you mean it. I agree with you in all you say, but, Thorn, you're the man for this place! There isn't any question about that."

"You forget that I was president in junior year."

"So you were. I was mightily interested to forget that, wasn't I? Well, what has that to do with it?" he added hastily. "You can be re-elected, can't you?"

"That won't do," spoke up Clark warmly. "Of course, we aren't discounting Thorn, for we all know what he is, but it never has been the custom in Winthrop to re-elect officers."

"Hasn't it?" said Will dryly, as he perceived the direction of his classmate's thoughts. "What of that? Just because a thing never has been done isn't any reason for saying it never shall be done, is it?"

"The fellows wouldn't do it," repeated Clark stolidly. "You know as well as I that custom has the force of law here."

"Yes," said Will half-angrily. "Yes, I know it. There are a lot of chaps here who haven't individuality enough or force of character enough to think or act for themselves. They're always looking back to see how it was done before they came here. They never had an idea and they never think, they only think they think. Bah! There's about as much life in them as there is in a dead leaf hanging on a branch of a tree in winter. You can't shake it off. It

just hangs on and hasn't even life enough to know it's dead. That's the way it is with a lot of the fellows who are forever hanging on to what has been. I'd rather be a prophet any day and be stoned to death, if I could only have my face toward the truth, than to be an historian forever digging among dead men's bones and be applauded and glorified just because I couldn't see in any direction except behind me."

"Why, Phelps," said Clark hastily, somewhat abashed by the warmth of his classmate's words, "I didn't mean that, you know. I just meant——"

"That's all right, old man. Don't say a word," interrupted Will quickly.

"Will you send us word or shall we come again, Phelps?" inquired Thorn rising.

"I'll let you know to-morrow morning."

"Good night, then," said Thorn, preparing to depart. "Come along, Clark," he added, as he perceived that the senior was inclined to remain.

Left to himself, Will thought over his problem for a half-hour, and then he suddenly decided to go down and consult Doctor Brown.

"Now, doctor," he began when he had been welcomed in the young professor's room, "I've come to you because I need your advice."

"Matter of importance?"

"To me it is. Now, I've been class president in junior year, and up to this time when the final election for the senior offices comes. There's a good deal of division in the class and—and—well, it doesn't

sound very modest, I know, for me to say it, doctor, but—but—some of the fellows have been to me and said that if I would say the word they would all unite on me and I could be elected again."

There was a slight scowl on the young professor's face as he said, "I never thought very highly of college politics, Phelps."

"Neither do I," responded Will warmly. "What I'm telling you isn't because I believe in it, but because I'm giving you the facts."

"Do you personally believe you could be re-elected?"

"Yes, sir," replied Will quietly, though the color flushed into his face as he spoke.

"Very well. Why shouldn't you be, then? I see no reason why you should not."

"Hold on a minute, doctor. I haven't told you all. I was elected president of the Y. M. C. A. to-night."

"And that will shut you out from the other?"

"Yes, sir, if I take it."

"And if you should not?"

"Oh, then, I might be elected president of the class."

"You want me to advise you what to do?"

"If you please."

"I might very easily give you my impression, but it is not my decision but your own that is required, I fancy," said Doctor Brown pleasantly.

"Yes, sir. I know. But let me explain. Just

suppose that I had been elected president of the Y. M. C. A. to-night by a clique that wanted to shut me out from the election to-morrow night. What would you do then?"

"I should promptly decline to accept the position."

"But suppose there was another body that had worked hard for you because they felt—at least that's what they were kind enough to say, doctor—that I could do perhaps a little more than some of the other fellows——"

"Have you been active in the work, Phelps?"

"Not very."

"How do you feel about the matter yourself?" inquired Doctor Brown after a brief silence.

"Why, it's this way; of course, I should like to be class president. It's a great honor and I know it would please my father immensely, and I'd rather please him than any one on earth—even myself, I sometimes think," Will hastily added. "On the other hand, both fellows who talked with me about the other place used a word that I can't seem to get away from."

"What was it?"

"Opportunity."

The professor smiled and there crept into his expression a tenderness which Will failed to see. "Phelps, let me tell you something." Doctor Brown's voice was clear and decisive, and Will looked up quickly. "There are two questions—I mean two that are supreme among the many—which every man is

compelled to face while he is in college. The first comes early in his course and is, 'What am I going to make for myself of all this?' That you met at the beginning of your junior year, just as you met it in another form in your freshman year, and in my own department you have settled that well. The other question is, 'What am I going to do with the results of my college work?' There is an expression I heard when I was a senior myself—it was a word that one of the college preachers had used and I have never been able to get away from it."

"What was it?"

"'Culture for service.' I seem to see it everywhere. I hear it in the night, I find it before me when I go into my classroom. 'Culture for service.' 'Culture for service.'"

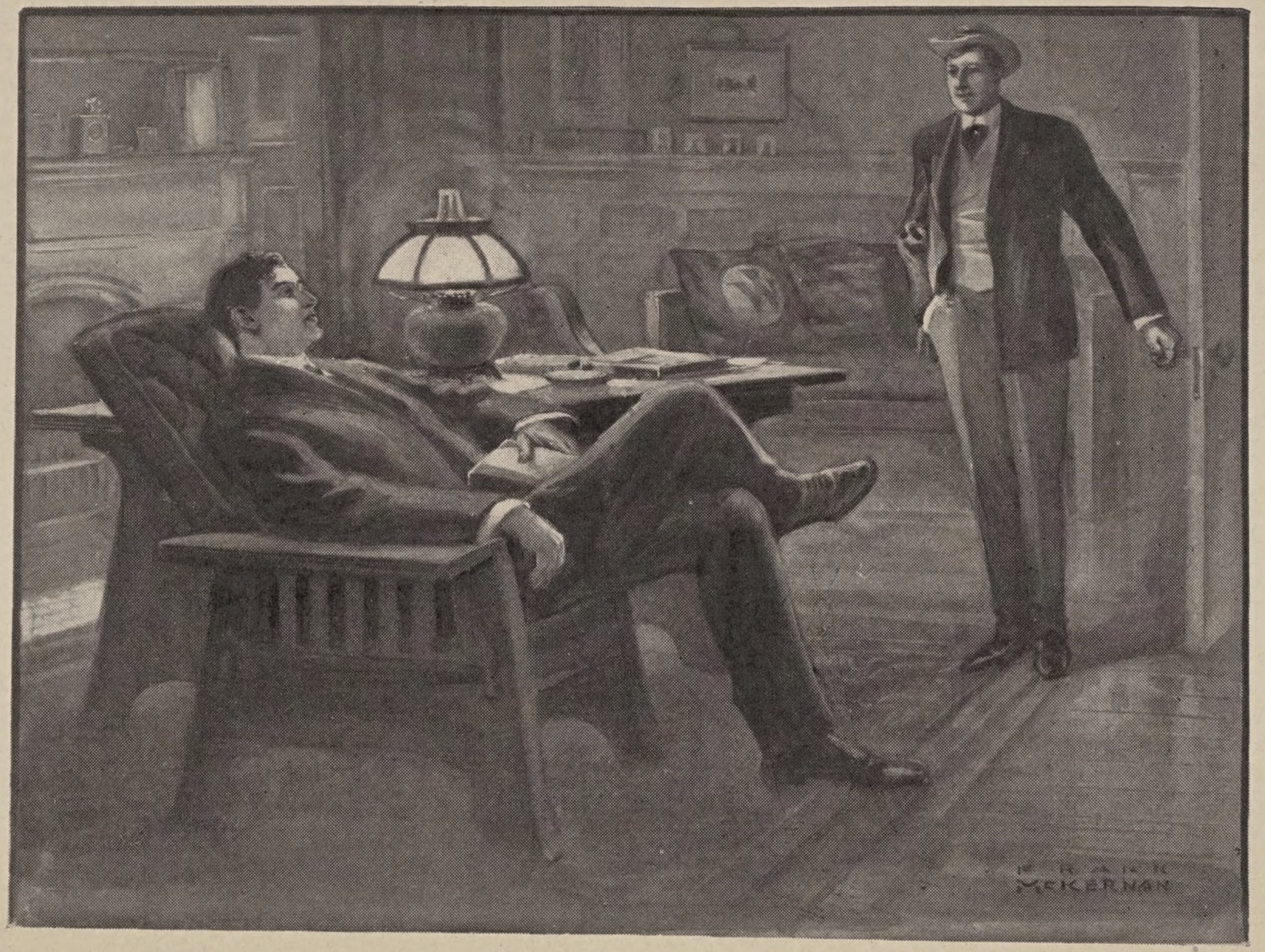
"You think, then, I would do better to accept the presidency of the Y. M. C. A.?"

"I do not say so," replied Doctor Brown hastily. "The distasteful is not always synonymous with duty. A man is in duty bound to make the most of himself, so that his greater culture may be of greater service. It is simply a question of the position which will afford the greater opportunity——"

"Ah, there it is again!" interrupted Will with a laugh. "It is always 'opportunity.'"

"'Always'? I thought opportunity had wings on her feet and that the back of her head was bald."

"So it is. I see what you mean. Thank you for your words. Good night!"



"'I see what you mean. Thank you for your words. Good night.'"

Page 301.

Directly from Doctor Brown's room Will Phelps went to Thorn's humble quarters in North Hall. "I've come to tell you that I accept the position of president," he said as soon as he had been admitted.

"Good! Good for you, Phelps! I mean just what I say. It will be good for the association, but it will be better for you. And I speak from experience."

"Perhaps not just like mine," suggested Will.

"Not exactly. But, Phelps, don't you suppose I know just what this has cost? Don't you think I knew what Bonnett's plans were?" Thorn grasped Will's hand as his classmate arose to depart, but not another word was spoken.

Almost on fire with a sudden resolution he had formed, Will ran back to his room, consulted with Foster, and in a brief time both departed from the building. It was long after midnight when the two seniors returned, but there was an expression of satisfaction on each of the boyish faces when they compared their experiences, but their labors were resumed on the following morning and continued without interruption until late in the afternoon.

The purpose and results became apparent in the class meeting that followed, when Will, in what his friends were pleased to term "the speech of his life," nominated Thorn for president. Will's speech was followed by a ringing one from Aldridge, the prize debater of his class, and almost before they were aware of what was being done Thorn was declared elected president of the senior class.

The face of the newly elected president was a study. Blank amazement and consternation were followed by an expression of eagerness, which in turn was followed by a look which not one of his friends had ever seen upon his face. Indeed, when, in response to the call, he advanced to the chair, it was evident for a moment that he was barely able to speak. A strange hush fell over the class, but in a moment it passed and the election proceeded with the dignity that the new presiding officer imparted to the proceedings.

To Will's great surprise he was himself elected to be the class poet, and though he sincerely "desired to be excused," he did not refer to his feelings and with apparent gratitude accepted the honor, though the words of the "rounded, rolling orb" somehow seemed to be sounding in his ears all the time he was speaking. He forgot his own feeling, which had been born of his knowledge that much, too much doubtless, would be expected of him, when, as the class dispersed, Clark approached him and in a savage whisper said, "I want a word with you, Phelps!"

CHAPTER XXXI

CONCLUSION

"I DON'T like this! I don't like it a little bit!" said Clark angrily, when he and Will had withdrawn from the room in which the class meeting had been held.

"Don't like what?" inquired Will, as with a smile of amusement he faced his classmate.

"I ought to have been elected president, and you know it! Last year, we—that is, some of the fellows—made a deal with Bonnett's crowd and we stood by you for class president. Now, you know as well as I that you were to stand by me this year——"

"I don't know anything of the kind!" interrupted Will sharply. "I never made a 'deal,' as you call it, and I never gave a promise. I didn't try to get the office last year, and, if you'll ask Bonnett, he'll tell you that I told him I wouldn't take it."

"But you did take it."

"Yes. I couldn't help myself."

"I guess you could have helped it if you had tried very hard," said Clark so soberly that the exclamation of anger that rose to Will's lips was not spoken. The man evidently was in earnest and really felt that he had been deprived of his deserts. It was pitiful but none the less true, and Will's feeling of irritation

gave place to one of mingled contempt and compassion.

"You know," continued Clark, "that I am as good a speaker as Thorn, and I have stood as high in the class as he has. I think the class looks up to me and honors me just as much as it does Thorn. I can write as well as he, and I cannot understand why you should have turned against me."

"I didn't turn against you," responded Will quietly, restraining his feeling of disgust at the attitude of his classmate.

"You worked for Thorn," suggested Clark.

"Certainly. I like him. He is modest and he is as true as steel. But because one worked for Thorn it doesn't mean that he worked against any one else."

"I should have been elected if you hadn't done what you did. And I worked for you to be elected president of the Y. M. C. A. too. I did not vote for you to be class poet."

"That was your privilege, and, for my part, I wish more had thought as you did. You mustn't blame me, then, because I didn't vote for you. Good-by." Will turned sharply about and departed from the room.

In the days that came and went so swiftly the feeling of satisfaction in the class was so evident that even Clark's protest went no further. With his work in history, which still remained supreme in Will's plans, his labors in behalf of the association of which he was president, and the preparation of the poem which he must as class poet read on class day of com-

mencement week, his time was fully occupied. There was not only an enthusiasm in the varied tasks but also an unusual feeling that arose from the knowledge that now everything was being done for the last time.

The foot-ball games, the track meets, etc., all were so enthusiastically applauded and appreciated by the seniors that they became almost as exuberant as the freshmen, though from a markedly different motive.

In his work for the Y. M. C. A. Will had been enabled to carry out a few of his own ideas, but he appreciated the prophecy of Thorn in that he himself had been the one to gain most. He had striven to be natural and he had the satisfaction of perceiving that a freshness and directness had drawn some helpers upon whose aid he relied. But when the year drew near to its close Mott was still as distant and apparently hostile as he had been through the long period since the break came. Will on one or two occasions had endeavored to draw the fellow to him, but he had been so quietly and yet positively rebuffed that the senior had made no further advances.

Will was, therefore, the more surprised when one night about a week before the year ended Mott came to his room.

"Alone, Phelps?" inquired Mott as he entered. "I believe I used to call you 'Mr. Phelps' when I was a freshman."

"That belongs to the pre-historic times," responded Will pleasantly. "Yes. I'm alone. Sit down, Mott. Have a chair."

The sophomore accepted the invitation and then he turned directly to Will and said, "It's about time we had an understanding, isn't it?"

"Yes, I think it is."

"You never understood me, Phelps."

"That's more than likely."

"For a long time I haven't been able to get over what you said to me."

"What did I say?"

"You accused me—of—of—stealing."

"I don't think I did quite that," replied Will hastily.

"Oh, no, not in direct words, but you implied it."

Will was silent, for he was unable to deny the statement of Mott.

"You see, I felt it all the more because I knew who had done the stealing and I thought you ought to know too. At least you ought to have seen enough to know that I—I—wouldn't be guilty of it."

"You—knew—who—did—it?" said Will slowly.

"That's what I said."

"Why didn't you tell me?"

"Because I didn't want to. You wouldn't have told, Phelps."

"I don't know about that. How did you find out?"

Mott hesitated a minute and then said, "I was sitting here in your room one day—you know I was a sort of shadow for you when I was a freshman, and —that day when I heard you coming up the stairs I ran to your bedroom. I don't just know what made

me do it, but I did. Well, it wasn't you that came, after all."

"Who was it?"

Mott smiled and shook his head as he said, "I didn't think very much about it and I was just going to come out of the bedroom when I saw that the fellow was searching Bennett's desk. I shouldn't have thought very much about that, either, only the fellow ran from the room in a few moments and he went on his tiptoes. It didn't look just right, but I never dreamed that—that the fellow wasn't perfectly straight. I should probably have forgotten all about it if it hadn't been for that talk you had with me. It made me mad, of course, but it opened my eyes too. I thought of what I had seen going on that day in your room and so I went straight to the fellow. And I made him disgorge. He was scared, and the worst of it was, he didn't have a cent of money."

"But money and watch were both brought back."

"Yes, he gave up the watch."

"How about the money? You say he didn't have any."

"Not a cent."

"Where did it come from, then?"

Mott was silent a moment before he said, "I can't explain that."

"Then I can," said Will quickly. "You made that up yourself."

"I'm never called very flush," responded Mott, a trifle uneasily.

"Mott, you paid the money back for the fellow yourself," repeated Will.

"That's what you say."

"That's what you did, now, didn't you?"

"Well, you see, I didn't want any of you to lose, and, besides, it was not a very huge amount, anyway."

Will's eyes were shining as he looked at his visitor. "Mott," he exclaimed as he leaped from his chair, "what a fool I was! I never can forgive myself! Never! Honestly, though, I was more troubled than you ever thought I was. I was afraid you'd got into debt or some scrape or other and had not stopped to think of what you were doing. And yet I never really believed you were guilty. I couldn't, though you'll have to acknowledge that perhaps some things didn't look just right."

"Of course they didn't," assented Mott. "I knew it. I knew it all the time, but I couldn't say a word, because I was tied up to the fellow, you see."

"Mott, I was to blame."

"So was I. Do you know what brought me to time?"

"No. What was it?"

"When you gave up the presidency of the class and took the place in the Y. M. C. A. I'm not very much of a Y. M. C. A. man myself, but I knew what that cost you. And I can tell you it counted with me too."

Will's eyes were shining as he said, "I never thought of that."

"Naturally. Are bygones bygone, Phelps?"

"They certainly are for me! We've had our wormwood and our gall."

"Not very much of the former. More of the latter for me."

Will laughed, and the two clasped hands. When Mott departed Will could hear him as he shouted up the stairway, "Thou rapid, rolling, rounded orb," and the senior laughed aloud. Old times were back again and it almost seemed as if all things conspired to make the closing days of his college course the brightest and most tender of all.

Will's standing in his class had not been sufficiently high to secure for him a part on the commencement programme, but his delight over the honors that Foster received was almost as keen as his classmate's. When the prizes were announced and Will heard his own name called as that of the one to whom the second prize in history was awarded, his amazement was almost as great as his pleasure. He had worked in that department and worked hard, but had never a thought of winning a prize.

His mother was in Winthrop for the closing days, but Will's father had been unable to be present. Keen as Will's disappointment was, he was compelled to be busy all the time, but he daily sent his father a telegram. Miss Stone was in attendance, and the appearance of Winthrop, with its beautiful lawns, its ivy-covered buildings, the bright skies, and the crowds of eager, interested people, old and young, combined to make the scene and experience indeed memorable.

On class day the seniors in cap and gown marched to the campus adjoining the chapel, and there, after the class ivy had been planted, they seated themselves in a semicircle on the lawn, and the exercises of the day were held. Will's poem was declared to be "immense," and the historian and prophet fairly outdid themselves. The assembly warmly applauded everything that was done, and it was Mott who led the cheering when Will's poem was read.

On the following day the commencement exercises proper were held, and in dignity and state the graduating class, still in cap and gown, filed, for the last time as students, into the familiar pews of the old chapel. Will was not aware of all that occurred, his thoughts were in such a whirl, but when at last the speeches, both those in Latin and those in English, had been delivered, and the diplomas and degrees had been bestowed, the class departed, realizing that now the goal before them for four years was reached, that they were no longer students at Winthrop, but had taken their places among the alumni.

As soon as he was free Will ran to the telegraph office and sent the following message to his father:

"Educated! Yours truly, W. Phelps, B. A."

On his way back he joined his mother, who was walking with Miss Stone. His eyes were shining, and his excitement was evident. "I can't bear to leave it all," he said. "I love these hills and trees, every one! I don't want to go to the city. I'd rather stay right here. I think I have become a good deal of a

farmer," he added demurely. "At least I love the fields and rocks and hills. I shall miss them."

"You've gained something, though," suggested Miss Stone.

"Yes. I know that's so."

"You have at least 'won a good degree.' I heard Doctor Brown say that you had won it too. He said you had paid a good price, but you had received what you deserved."

"Did he say that?" inquired Will eagerly.

"Yes. He seems to be very fond of you, Will," said Mrs. Phelps.

"It's worth a course in Winthrop just to meet that man!" exclaimed Will. "He taught me history—and some things besides. Some of the other men know as much as he does, but there isn't the same—oh, I don't know just what to call it—the same sort of life. They're too much machines; he's a man."

"Here comes Alfred!" said Miss Stone, as she perceived Mott approaching.

"Thou rapid, rolling, rounded orb!" exclaimed Mott, stopping and in loud tones addressing the sun.

"Drop that!" ordered Will sharply, though he laughed as he spoke.

"Certainly," responded Mott, bowing low. "Any other commands?"

"Not just now."

"I tell you, Phelps," said Mott, quickly changing his tone, "you have certainly won out in your college course. Track team, tennis, literary work, prize in

history, and, last of all, your degree. But I've learned one thing, and that is that everything has a price, and even a college degree has to be paid for."

"Yes, but it all pays too," said Will.

Mott again bowed and said, "I know you speak the words of truth and soberness. You have got the goods you paid for. Let your mantle fall on me, thou venerable Bachelor of Arts."

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